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THE NEW REPUBLIC

A Journal of Politics and the Arts—June 12, 1976, 60 ce

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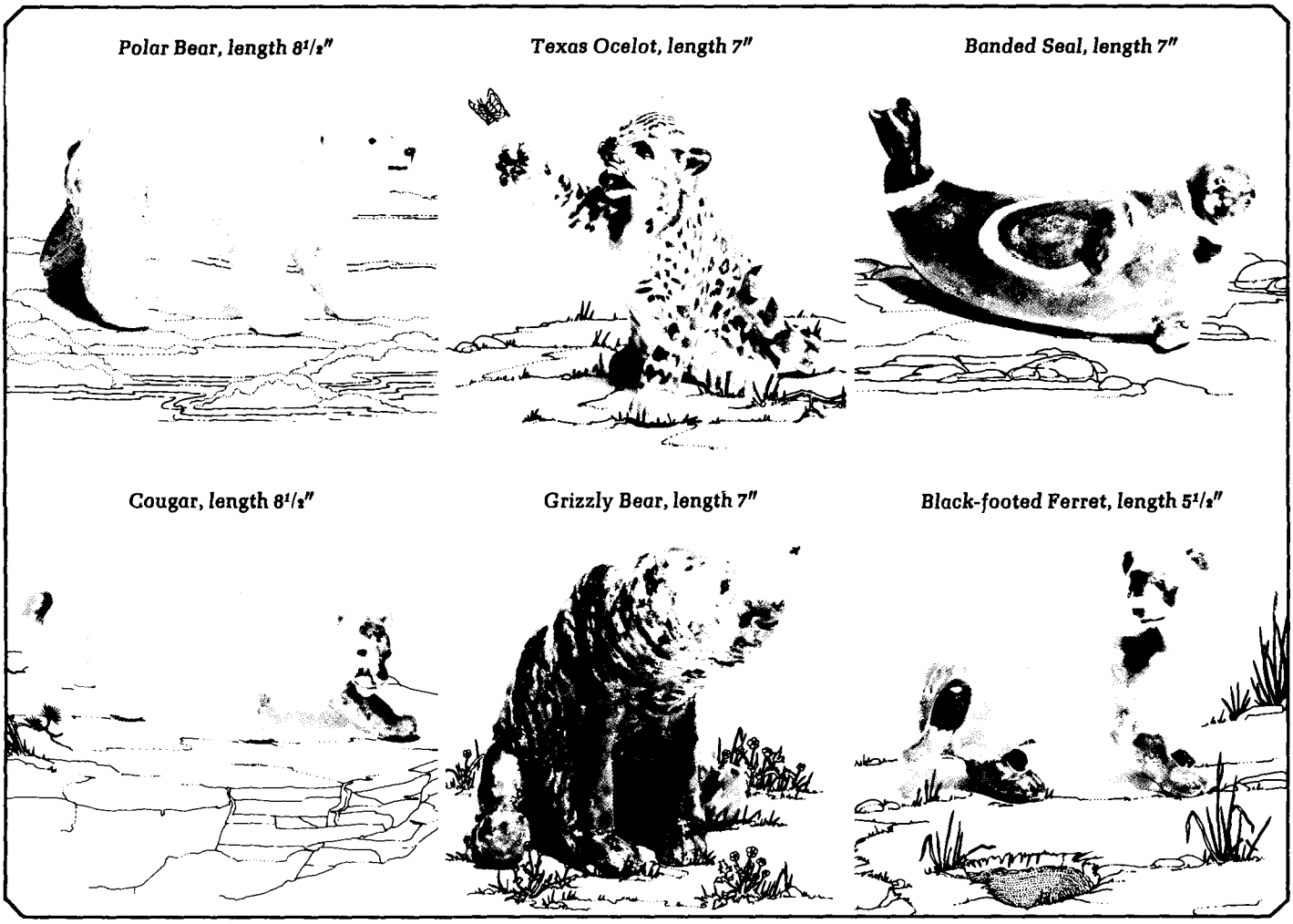

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TRB

from Washington ®
June 12, 1976

Lebanese Hell

You dial "O" for operator and ask for Overseas. When she answers you say you want Beirut University College, extension 33, Beirut, Lebanon. She asks doubtfully, "Beirut?" and you repeat, "Yes, Beirut, Lebanon, where all the killing is." It's not much to ask, is it? Just a call into hell.

The operator may say one of several things: "All calls to Lebanon are indefinitely suspended," or, Call back in three minutes, or three hours, or three days. Or she may say (she did the other day) "Hold the line." The electric spark goes under the Atlantic, or by satellite (who can understand these things?) and there is somebody with an accent on the other end, and a voice saying, "Yes, this is Beirut, but there is no such number," and you say firmly, "yes there is, for Ghassan Rubeiz, at the University." Then suddenly another voice breaks in, "Why—isn't that the son of Michel Rubeiz?—I know him well!" and the two operators talk. "Love and kisses," says the one in Lebanon unexpectedly, "how is everything in New York?"; a little later you have your party. Shrapnel has broken the dormitory windows in Ras Beirut, you learn, but no direct hits; all alive so far.

Crazy? It's all crazy, the world is crazy, but some places are crazier than others. Beirut, one of the loveliest cities in the world, on the Mediterranean—the banking and communications center of the Middle East; high rise apartments of oil sheik investments going up over the hills; palm trees; big cars driving recklessly; a horse-drawn vendor honking a rubber horn in traffic, shouting "Kaz!" (kerosene)—a city with everything going for it, getting rich, everything to live for, Christians, Moslems, Palestinians, living in apparent harmony, needing nothing but trust to survive and then, collapse. After 30 years of independence and saluting the flag, and reciting patriotic verses in the schools, and boasting about Greater Lebanon—trust disappears. And suddenly there is the Holiday Inn, half built, blasted with gunfire, a sniper fortress for all sides killing each other. It had to be called "Holiday Inn"; nothing else could so dramatize the irony of the situation where now some are trying to make peace, some to win a civil war and most merely to survive. I used to think the world would end with nuclear bombs; it will be more lingering, when trust ends and street fighting starts.

There have been 20,000 deaths so far among Lebanon's three million people or the equivalent carnage in US terms of 1,500,000. The wounded are in proportion. It is almost impossible for Americans to grasp it. But by reason of family connections my living room has become a center of Lebanese émigrés, the upper-class Diaspora of academic intellectuals, that is scattering doctors and lawyers and professors and scientists out of the doomed city. Nothing like it has happened in modern times. French refugees must have talked like this in little awed circles in London at the time of the Terror. Some have come with what they had on their backs but they are alive, they are lucky: they have education in their heads. David has got a job at the World Bank; Amin, the pediatrician, will go to Duke, they are Orthodox; Bassam, the Moslem, will find a job with his medical degree. The dispersal will wipe out Lebanon's professional class; they talk of friends—who's in Egypt, Syria, Saudi Arabia, France, Kuwait? Craftsmen, too. The celebrated Lebanese artisans in gems and jewelry have gone to France, many of them, and some, of all places, to Los Angeles. They are separating 'round the world. A year ago parents pleaded, Don't go; now they beg them to leave. A year of bombings, vengeance, senseless killings, listening to the Middle East service of BBC at night with the stately sound of Big Ben and the emotionless English voice telling the disasters of the day . . . trying to cash checks, find food, live in buildings where nobody pays rent or gets pay, where there is no mail and where water, electricity and telephone are intermittent and hope always deferred—these, I sense, have ended identification with Lebanon. They do not hate Moslems or Christians, this group; it is bewilderment, not hate. There is no Enemy, no foreign foe; it is chaos they fear, factionalized feuding. Maybe Syria can bring peace; they hope so. There were forebodings even in former days of shishkebab and tabouli, of arak and mezza, how carefree they seemed; it was always agreed that the constitution had to be changed, that reforms had to come, that the unfair parliament, stacked against the Moslems by Christian conservatives, six to five, must be reformed and the despotic powers of the president curbed.

Also, sooner or later something must be done about the immigrant Palestinians who fled into the country starting in 1948, with another flood in 1967. It was a mistake, it was agreed, to let them have their own arms in their refugee camps, supported by the UN: they were making a state within a state. Yes, something had to be done, everyone agreed; but on the other hand look how prosperous the country was; it must be doing something right! With all Lebanon's faults, in the long run the system worked pretty well and other nations could envy its democratic freedoms, its theater and sophistication, and its high living standards—for the affluent, that is.

With each other the émigrés joke at misfortunes; it is like 1929 when it wasn't so bad since everybody was ruined. One laughs at the big profit he made on real estate three years ago. What did he do with the money? Put it in a ruined bank . . . Another has a car, an Opel, stashed in a garage—have they found it yet? Or the parents' home in the mountains, everything looted. Amin's nephew with a degree is selling "Nido" (powdered milk) from a pushcart, ducking snipers. Some are killed. These émigrés here are merely penniless—they are the lucky ones.

They ask about America. Well, I explain, we are doing well; it is true we have no energy program yet after two years because politicians can't agree. Sooner or later we must do something about welfare, health insurance, income disparity. Institutions that produce a year-long election every four years ought to be modernized; something is wrong with a political system that produced Agnew, and Nixon, and Vietnam and seven million unemployed. But these can wait, I explain; plenty of time, no hurry.

Ghassan speaks quietly. "We all live in our Holiday Inn," he says.

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THE NEW REPUBLIC *A Journal of Politics and the Arts, Vol. 174, No. 24, Issue 3205, June 12, 1976. Published weekly (except the issues of January 3, July 10, August 14, August 28) and distributed by* The New Republic, Inc., *1220 19th Street, N.W. Washington, DC 20036. Phone 331-7494. Single copy, 60¢; Yearly subscriptions, $21; foreign, $24; students, $14. Send all remittances and correspondence about subscriptions, undelivered copies and changes of address to Subscription Department,* The New Republic, *381 West Center Street, Marion, Ohio 43302.* *Copyright 1976 by The New Republic, Inc.* *Item g. Second class postage paid at Washington, DC and additional mailing offices. Indexed in Reader's Guide.*

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Levi and Busing

Attorney General Edward Levi's short announcement on May 29 that he "will not file a brief in the Supreme Court at the present stage of the Boston school desegregation case" brought the curtain down on a two-week public performance by the Justice Department that had the contrived cliff-hanging quality of *The Perils of Pauline*. If the administration's purpose was deliberately to generate enough publicity over its opposition to forced busing in school desegregation cases to win primary votes for President Ford, the strategy probably worked. If, as is at least equally probable, the attorney general was seeking to reach a principled decision based on a legitimate, good-faith belief that busing had been carried too far, the public posturing and suspenseful nature of the decision-making process was a total disaster and may have impaired whatever credibility an ultimate Justice Department position may have with the Supreme Court.

The public furor began with leaks that lawyers in the office of Solicitor General Robert Bork were drafting a legal memorandum urging the Supreme Court to hear the Boston case in order to "clarify" the proper use of busing as a desegregation tool. The leak was probably unintentional, but the attorney general was not bashful in disclosing the hordes of visitors who then descended on his office. Busing advocates and opponents from Congress, the Executive Branch and private groups emerged daily from the attorney general's suite into the arms of waiting reporters and television news teams to whom they breathlessly divulged Messrs. Levi's and Bork's whispered promises and vague threats. The national news media made it appear as if some major national policy were being considered. An imminent decision having a direct effect on the nation's schools and on racial harmony was expected, particularly after the attorney general's limousine was photographed entering and leaving the White House grounds.

The suspense was heightened by a full week given over to cogitation by Levi. During that time President Ford, in the enthusiasm of campaign rhetoric, misstated the constitutional issue being weighed by the attorney general. Suddenly the landmark school desegregation case, *Brown* v. *Board of Education*, was a candiate for overruling by the Supreme Court. Only diehard segregationists could take comfort from such a possibility, and the President's *gaffe* was soon clarified in a

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press briefing. But the slip added to the public image that some radical change in federal policy, having immediate effects, was at hand.

It was hard to find, amidst all the sound and fury, anything of real significance—and the final announcement did little to clear things up. From the outset of the remarkable scene down to its very end, two important circumstances were obscured from public view. The first related to the immediacy of the impact of what the Justice Department was planning to do. Even had the attorney general decided to adopt the most far-reaching position imaginable (and repudiation of *Brown* v. *Board of Education* does not qualify under this test), his assertion of that proposition in the Boston case—given the present stage of the litigation—would have had no effect on the law until many months from now, if ever. Amidst all the hoopla, no one seemed to care much about the fact that the Supreme Court must first decide whether it will hear the Boston case at all. And if it were to hear the case, argument would not be scheduled until next fall, with a decision in the spring or summer of 1977. A second fact that was ignored was the pattern of losses the Justice Department has suffered, even at the hands of the Burger Court, when it has sought to slow down or otherwise impede school desegregation. The Court's members were unwilling to accept what was urged upon them by the Executive Branch in an earlier round of the school-busing battle, so that the solicitor general's intervention on the side of busing opponents would not be a reason for premature rejoicing in their camp.

In his final formal announcement, Levi acknowledged that there was legitimate public interest in why he had decided at the last minute not to intervene, but he insisted it would not be "proper" for him to disclose his reasons while the cases were under consideration by the Court. The propriety of the two weeks of fanfare that preceded the announcement and of the President's off-the-cuff remarks about Boston and other cases in litigation was apparently less worrisome. It seems reasonable to assume, however, that one element (most harmful to the opponents of busing in Boston) was that the Boston case is not one that, on its own merits, deserves Supreme Court attention. The Court does not usually agree to hear cases that concern only the application of established legal principles to a particular fact situation, and that is exactly what the Boston case was.

In June 1974, Judge Arthur Garrity of Boston's federal court issued a 70-page decision in which he found, in great detail, that there had been a systematic program of segregation by the Boston School Committee, and that this policy had affected all the city's schools. No new constitutional questions were involved. Principles approved as recently as the Supreme Court's 1973 ruling in the Denver school case were applied. The federal court of appeals considered the matter fully and agreed with Judge Garrity's decision. The Supreme Court, on this first go-round, refused to hear the case.

What remained was how the lower court would remedy the deliberate policy of racial segregation that the school board had implemented. The decision issued by Judge Garrity in June 1975 on this phase of the case broke no new ground. In a pair of 1971 rulings relating to school systems in Charlotte, North Carolina and Mobile, Alabama, the Supreme Court, in an opinion by Chief Justice Burger from which there had been not a single dissent, catalogued the remedies that could be used in desegregating public schools. Busing was explicitly approved, with the Court observing that, "by the very nature of the problem," it was impossible to announce "rigid guidelines as to student transportation . . . for application to the infinite variety of problems presented in thousands of situations." The busing required by the Charlotte desegregation plan was upheld, with Chief Justice Burger noting that approximately 23,000 children (of a school population of 84,000) were to be transported, the average elementary-grade ride was seven miles long, and the longest time would not exceed 35 minutes. Judge Garrity's order in Boston requires the busing of 21,000 (of a total of 72,000) children, with an average ride under two-and-a-half miles and a top travel time of 25 minutes. On its face, the volume of busing ordered in Boston does not go beyond what has already been approved by a unanimous Supreme Court.

Without the solicitor general's assistance, those who are attacking Judge Garrity's order (which had been approved unanimously in a painstakingly detailed opinion by the federal court of appeals in January) have virtually no chance of interesting the Supreme Court in their case. According to knowledgeable reports, Solicitor General Bork has devised a constitutional theory on court-ordered school busing that he would like to try out on the Court in an appropriate case. Before the public brouhaha, Boston appeared to be a possible candidate for expression of such a view, since it involved a substantial amount of busing, some of which—according to proponents of the Bork theory—went beyond the remedy a court could legitimately give.

The Bork solution to the busing conundrum, as reported in the press, is to authorize student transportation as a remedy for past segregation of students only when the racial isolation is the direct result of a school board's segregationist policy. Schools that would have been all-black or all-white even if the school board had not gerrymandered attendance zones or located new buildings to encourage or preserve racial isolation should, under this proposal, remain outside any busing plan. If this proposition is incorporated in a Justice Department brief, it will carry the prestige of the Executive Branch and will, presumably, be supported by persuasive arguments crafted by the skilled group of

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lawyers who are the solicitor general's deputies and assistants.

Such a presentation, while helpful to the opponents of busing, is no sure sign of success. In the Charlotte and Mobile cases, decided in the heyday of the Nixon administration, then Solicitor General Erwin Griswold—formerly dean of the Harvard Law School—filed a brief extolling "neighborhood schools" and asking the Court to require busing only for those students who voluntarily chose to be transferred from schools where their race is in a majority to those where they would be in a minority (that is, for black students choosing to shift out of virtually all-black schools). The Court unanimously repudiated this early anti-busing position. It not only approved a court order in Charlotte that required substantial busing, but also rejected a Department of HEW plan that minimized student transportation. And in Mobile it disapproved what the lower courts had done partly because "inadequate consideration was given to the possible use of bus transportation."

Would a majority of the Court be persuaded by a similar position now that several years have elapsed and busing continues to be a prickly subject with an increasing surge of public opinion against it? That possibility was reduced—at least with respect to the Boston case—by the public antics of the past few weeks. Had the attorney general filed a document in the Boston case, the Supreme Court would have had to wonder whether the position was a constructive effort by conscientious government lawyers to assist the courts in dealing with an increasingly difficult national problem or whether it was a political ploy by an incumbent President running hard in an election year.

In looking back on this brief episode, the public disclosure of the Justice Department's intention appears to have had one beneficial effect. Both Bork and Levi were apparently unaware, until the storm swirled around them, how much harm might be done to the cause of peaceful school desegregation around the country if the Supreme Court appears to reward the violence in Boston with a decision to hear that case. The most vigorous and persuasive arguments made against participation in the Boston case emphasized the non-peaceful character of the resistance to busing in Boston. If, as a result of eleventh-hour intervention by the solicitor general, the Court had agreed to consider the Boston case, it would have been a signal to many communities throughout the country that are abiding by court orders, even if they disagree with them, that their ends would better be achieved if they resorted to violence. The attorney general's reference, in his Saturday announcement, to the "strong and continuing commitment of the Department not to tolerate acts of lawlessness in violation of the order of the district court" is an oblique reference to this reason for staying out of the Boston case.

On the other hand, the extensive publicity has again isolated the judiciary on the issue of school desegregation. Congress has repeatedly enacted legislation trying to reduce the Court's authority to order busing, and the Ford administration's current position is reminiscent of the hands-off attitude taken by President Eisenhower to the *Brown* v. *Board of Education* ruling in the three years after it was first announced. It should not take another Little Rock to bring the Executive Branch to a recognition that it is not good enough to urge compliance with court orders while making public declarations that undermine the reasons for obedience.

Everybody's Affair

Elizabeth Ray slept with Wayne Hays, Dorothy Schiff had an affair of a sort with FDR, and JFK had some dealings with Judith Campbell Exner. Watergate has yielded to salacious sex, and it's on page-one of the *Times* and *Post*, not just the *National Enquirer*. There are mitigating circumstances to account for the prurient interest of the conventional press. Kennedy's friend was also a Mafia moll and Jack Kennedy and Sam Giancana both were murdered, and the Mafia was going to kill Castro, and maybe Castro killed Kennedy, and maybe Judy Campbell knew more than just how to show a guy a good time. And Wayne Hays allegedly had Miss Ray on the public payroll at $14,000 per annum merely to perform very personal services for him. Rumor has it, and don't we all love rumor, that Miss Ray did some other business with some other big guys on Capitol Hill and will disclose who in the paperback book she's got someone helping her write. Last we heard, *Time* was trying to find out exactly what she'd done for whom. A picture framer in Washington says he framed a photo of a President in the Lincoln bed with two, count 'em, two naked women.

There's a lot to be said about scandalous sex. It is interesting, let's admit it, though 'til recently Washington sex came up in party gossip but was kept out of the newspapers because of an unwritten law that politicians' philandering was their own business and not the public's. Reporters have sex lives too, and the golden rule seemed to apply. Everyone is here because of sex; the new morality and human nature provide many options to the conjugal bed; there are probably as many skeletons as there are closets. So the question arises, do we want a society in which private acts become everybody's affair?

Wayne Hays has very few friends, he's a mean and powerful politician who has abused a lot of people who would like to see him knocked from his perch, as Wilbur Mills was knocked from his because of indiscretions with drink and Fanne Fox. But if a political enemy cannot be defeated in fair and open competition for power, should he be stripped of his power because of

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sexual self-indulgence? It's not an easy question to answer. An official, in some eyes, should be a paragon of virtue, and if he's not maybe the electorate ought to find that out. Senatorial alcoholism can interfere with a fellow's competence. Sex on the job doesn't necessarily increase productivity. The public may have a right to find out that a congressman is using its money to pay for full-time whores.

Sex can ruin a guy; it happens with some regularity in England. Remember Profumo and Christine Keeler, Jeremy Thorpe and the male model? The double standard is partly responsible for the sex problem in public life, the morals that are mouthed are often violated in privacy and, because they are, that privacy becomes all the more important to those with things to hide. Blackmailers thrive in such circumstances and in an ideal world perhaps sex should be open and no one penalized for whatever he or she does with whomever. Sadly, careers are imperiled by the public disclosure of private acts, and even the Supreme Court has intruded into the bedroom by sanctioning sodomy laws. Sex scandals are a dirty business. Shed a tear for Wayne Hays. There but for the grace of *The Washington Post* go you.

White House Watch

Reagan's Half-Truths

A week on the last of the 1976 primary campaign trails with President Ford in Oregon and California and with Ronald Reagan in California left three impressions. There is nothing to say about Mr. Ford as a campaigner—a very dull campaigner—that hasn't been noted in this space and elsewhere. Traveling with Reagan is more fun and harder work than traveling with the President, partly because Reagan is a livelier person and speaker and partly because he can't afford to provide the texts and other aids to reporting that the White House establishment spews forth in expensive abundance. A reporter with Reagan has to rely upon his own notes and tape recorders, with the rare exception of a prepared summary of what the candidate may or may not actually say. The third impression is that Ronald Reagan is a master, the greatest master in this reporter's experience, of distortion that generally (but not always) contains a core of truth that makes it impossible or at least chancy to call the man a liar.

This does not apply to all that Reagan says on the stump. His account of his eight years as governor of California, for instance, including his bulling of a hostile legislature into doing what he wanted done and of trimming welfare rolls and costs without demonstrated harm to legitimate beneficiaries, is conceded by California journalists who don't admire him to be about as accurate as anyone expects a politician in the heat of contest to be. In this respect his performance is similar to that of former Governor Jimmy Carter of Georgia, who like Reagan naturally does not understate his achievements in office. Reagan is said by his staff to squirrel away unchecked anecdotes from news clippings and conversations with which he spices the standard speech—many politicians have one, but he sticks to his more faithfully than most—that he delivers at rallies and similar occasions. Most of these stories are peopled by misty characters whose identities and adventures tend to go unverified even by newspapers in the areas concerned. There is "the man in New Jersey" who was told by Social Security that he was dead, proved he wasn't, and after prolonged haggling was given $700 to pay for his funeral. There are the police and prosecutors in San Bernardino, California, who convicted a couple of hiding heroin in their baby's diaper and lost the case on appeal because the baby had not consented to be searched. There is Chicago's "Welfare Mary" (an actual person, somewhat enlarged by Reagan) who according to him drew $150,000 a year from fraudulent welfare claims and sported two Lincoln Continentals. And there is Reagan himself as depicted by Reagan in a San Diego TV interview on May 27, keeping fit at age 65 by riding horses on his ranch, digging his own post-holes and building his own fences because, "I like to do those things." His press secretary, Jim Lake, assured guffawing reporters that Reagan really does such work and has never been seen or pictured doing it because he values his privacy at home more than he would value the publicity.

More serious distortions and falsifications than the foregoing—if such they be—date essentially back to a 30 minute, paid-time TV speech that Reagan delivered March 31 and to a shorter TV statement that he made, also on paid time, on April 28. Several assertions in these effusions date back further, to the early weeks of the New Hampshire primary campaign and in a few instances to his gubernatorial campaigns in 1966 and 1970. The examples dealt with here were heard and observed during three days with him in the week of May 24—at a couple of press conferences, in set speeches, in two TV interviews and in a 25-minute chat, recorded by his staff electrician during a ride in his campaign limousine from Los Angeles to Pasadena.

Perhaps the most serious distortion has to do with the Panama Canal and negotiations for gradual transfer of its operation and of sovereignty over the Panama Canal Zone to Panama. It is an idiotic issue. But anyone of my age (69) who recalls the pride with which parents and neighbors greeted the completion and opening of the canal in 1914 must acknowledge that it symbolizes something of enormous importance in the American memory and psyche. Reagan says he didn't initiate the issue; people began raising it during his New

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Hampshire campaign and reacted "with stunned surprise" when he said yes, their government was negotiating to give away the canal. When I heard the subject raised in New Hampshire, it seemed to me that Reagan was primed to make the most of it and that his inquirers and hearers were primed to help him do it. After referring in his March 31 TV speech to "negotiations aimed at giving up our ownership of the Panama Canal Zone," he said: "Apparently, everyone knows about this except the rightful owners of the Canal Zone—you, the people of the United States." At a San Diego rally on May 27, he said: "For two years, without your knowledge, your government has been negotiating to give away sovereignty over the Panama Canal Zone."

Reagan had been told that I hoped to discuss some of what I regarded as his distortions and I said during our ride to Pasadena that his repeated indication that both the fact and the nature of the Panama negotiations had been concealed was one of these distortions. He was reminded that Secretary of State Henry Kissinger and Panama Foreign Secretary Juan Antonio Tack signed and made public a "statement of principles" to govern the negotiations on February 7, 1974. The statement said: "The treaty of 1903 [which granted to the US "in perpetuity" the rights and authority over the Canal Zone that it would possess "if it were sovereign"] and its amendments will be abrogated by the conclusion of an entirely new interoceanic canal treaty. The concept of perpetuity will be eliminated. . . . The Panamanian territory in which the canal is situated [the Canal Zone] shall be returned to the jurisdiction of the Republic of Panama. The Republic of Panama, in its capacity as territorial sovereign, shall grant to the United States of America . . . the right to use the lands, waters and airspace which may be necessary for the operation, maintenance, protection and defense of the canal and the transit ships . . . The Republic of Panama shall participate in the administration of the canal [and] in the protection and defense of the canal."

After reminding Reagan that he had mentioned without explaining the Kissinger-Tack statement the previous day, I said in part: "That statement has been on the public record since February 7, 1974. It was reincorporated in Current Policy Paper No. 9 at the State Department last September [actually last November]. The fact and nature of the negotiations have been very poorly and inadequately reported. But I would say it has *never* been concealed." Reagan answered in part: "Well, where we perhaps differ on that is in answering questions I may here and there get careless and use the word 'secret' that would not apply. I have generally, if I used the word 'secret,' said 'almost secret' negotiations. Now, in a country such as ours, where everything is out there, I cannot accept that it is just sheer coincidence that those two years of negotiations have been going on and then have the fiasco that took place during the Texas primary with the President there on Texas soil refuting me to the point that Ron Nessen had to say, 'Well, maybe the President's words were ill-chosen.'" Reagan referred to the President's mistaken statement to a canal defender on April 9 in San Antonio that "The United States, as far as I'm concerned, will never give up its defense responsibilities and capability. It will never give up the rights of navigation and so forth." The guiding statement, as shown above, commits the US to give up its "jurisdiction" (read "sovereignty") when a new treaty is negotiated and effective control much later—Panama says, in 25 years; the US says, in 40 to 50 years. Press Secretary Nessen apologized for the mistake and Mr. Ford said he'd been "imprecise."

In view of the 1974 statement's clear provision that the Canal Zone "shall be returned to the jurisdiction of the Republic of Panama," Reagan's frequent assertion—repeated to me during our conversation—that a House subcommittee recently uncovered the hitherto concealed fact that US "sovereignty" over the

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Canal Zone is in negotiation is worse than imprecision. When I said the 1974 statement specifically said the question of sovereignty was to be negotiated, Reagan replied, "Ah, now that I question." When he was asked at a California news conference if he proposed to terminate the present negotiations, he said no, he didn't—there were other things than sovereignty that could rightly be negotiated. He said in his March 31 speech: "We should end those negotiations and tell the General [Panamanian dictator Omar Torrijos]: We bought it, we paid for it, we built it, and we intend to keep it." Reagan said in California that the negotiations have been suspended until after the November election. I was told at the State Department that Ambassador Ellsworth Bunker met with the Panamanian negotiators in Panama on May 1 through May 7 and expects another meeting by late summer.

One of Reagan's major themes, expressed forcefully in his March 31 TV speech and reiterated ever since, is that the administration and "this totally irresponsible Congress" have let the US slide from "Number One" to "Number Two" in relative strength as compared with the Soviet Union. Discussing and justifying this claim in his conversation with me, he cited among other things "the statements of Sen. Clark, of Iowa, that he asked the military experts at the Library of Congress to give him a report and admitted that he wanted it because he believed that all this talk [of our still being Number One] and all of the administration requests for more money was because they were just simply building a scarecrow to get more money for defense. And so he thought he would get a report from the Library of Congress that would bear this out and he had to admit himself that he got a report from the Library that was probably more terrifying than any of the statements that I have made—the report that we were indeed in a very dangerous position."

It was Sen. John C. Culver of Iowa, not Sen. Dick Clark, who asked for the report. When I quoted the foregoing remarks about the report to the defense specialist on Sen. Culver's staff and asked if they were correct, "allowing for a little political rhetoric," the assistant answered: "No, that's totally false. Number one, we did not expect the report to say any particular thing. We asked for an objective analysis of where we were, how we got there, and what was significant, and we confined that report to military capabilities rather than overall national strength versus the Soviet Union. What we got did not surprise us. What surprised us was the way it was initially misinterpreted in the press, because they looked at the numbers rather than the text. Now of course if you look at the numbers the Russians have narrowed the gap in many areas in the past 10 years. Our superiority is less, but overall we are still superior. What we got was not terrifying. Culver has never said anything like that, nor has he ever disavowed the report. He has been a little upset at the way press reports took the numbers out of context." Reagan says he took the numbers he's been using out of the Culver report. Thus in his March 31 speech and later statements: "The Soviet Army outnumbers ours more than two-to-one and in reserves four-to-one. They out-spend us on weapons by 50 percent. Their Navy out-numbers ours in surface ships and submarines two-to-one. We are out-gunned in artillery three-to-one and their tanks outnumber ours four-to-one. Their strategic nuclear missiles are larger, more powerful and more numerous than ours. The evidence mounts that we are Number Two in a world where it is dangerous, if not fatal, to be second best."

Taxed by President Ford and others with arguing that the US must match the Soviet Union man-for-man, tank-for-tank etc., Reagan retorts that of course he isn't that silly; he knows that what counts is strategic and nuclear capability. When he took that line May 27 on San Diego TV station KFMB, during the best interview that I've seen him undergo, staffer Tom Lawrence said he'd just heard a Reagan radio commercial in which Reagan left "the listener with the definite impression that you are drawing strictly a man-to-man comparison." Reagan answered in part:

"Well, I think this has to be done. I've been making the charge that we are not Number One any more. Now to do that you have to point out the facts to substantiate this charge, particularly when there's been

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a reluctance to admit it. So I have pointed out the difference in naval vessels, in tanks, in artillery pieces, manpower, all that. But then, the obvious question comes, how do you counter this? You don't counter it by trying to enlist as many men as they do. But you do go ahead with the development of missile systems, things of this kind that our Congress has been reluctant to go forward with."

Lawrence: "So you are saying that qualitatively, not numerically but qualitatively, we are second?"

Reagan: "Yes. As a matter of fact, where this came from is the defense expert of the Library of Congress . . . He said for a time it was our qualitative advantage that kept us ahead in spite of their quantitative advantage. But he had to say that no longer is true. They have been coming up in quality, in addition to making their quantity so much superior."

Sen. Culver's defense specialist said the foregoing remark is a distortion of the Library of Congress report. The report said our qualitative advantage is less than it was, but we still have it.

The KFMB interviewers—Lawrence, Dick Carlson and Harold Keen—broke with their hard but fair questions through the bland geniality that Reagan generally displays. At times his mouth set in an ugly, venomous curve. A recent California President had that look.

John Osborne

Funding PIRGs

Nader's Vested Interest

Ralph Nader went before a Senate subcommittee on May 7 to appeal for passage of an odd piece of special interest legislation that had been introduced for him by Senators Kennedy and Cranston. The Nader amendment, as some people are calling it, would alter the Higher Education Act to make it easier for Nader to set up Public Interest Research Groups on college campuses. Nader has been stymied on some campuses by university administrators who do not appreciate the "democratic" logic of the way PIRGs raise money to operate.

A PIRG is a campus office, run quite often by lawyers, whose salaries are paid out of student activity fees. PIRGs do what they and their student backers want to do, among other things lobby state legislatures, police university administrations, fight pesticides, pharmaceutical price gouging, nuclear power and tooth decay. They are educational, Nader says, and they are adjuncts of his power. (Nader finds it convenient to assert that he has no direct control over PIRGs, though he did invent them, he goes to campuses to help organize them, he attacks administrators who resist them, and when otherwise thwarted he goes to Congress for help in putting down the opposition.) "There is no reason, in five years time, why I shouldn't have four or five thousand professionals all over the country," Nader told his biographer Charles McCarry. "The professionals," McCarry wrote, "will come for the most part from the student movement; they will work out of the Public Interest Research Groups supported by student funds. They will operate as autonomous units, but they will be energized by Nader's view of the world and they will attack on the basis of his priorities."

A PIRG is founded on a campus through a petition drive. If Nader-backed PIRG organizers can convince more than half a student body to endorse the idea, signed petitions are presented to the university with the request that two dollars or more be assessed each student each term from then on. The funding device is called a "negative checkoff" because everyone is made to pay the fee unless he specifically refuses or unless he presents himself for a refund. Nader explains that in a few instances, as is the case at Queens College in New York, the fee is mandatory for all students. At Rutgers all students are assessed the fee, but anyone who seeks a refund can get it later. At the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, the unwilling can check a box and then subtract the PIRG fee at registration.

The PIRG funding device resembles a selling practice of book clubs and certain other merchandisers. Members of book clubs get the monthly offering in the mail unless they head it off by sending in a refusal card. This is called "negative option" selling, and everyone agrees that it works far better from the seller's standpoint than a procedure requiring a positive act by the buyer. The book clubs defend negative option selling because its workings are clearly described to members when they voluntarily sign up to take part in discount book buying. PIRGs, on the contrary, take along for the ride not only the majority of students who sign petitions, but the rest who do not. Kids opposed to PIRG or indifferent to it are then saddled with the need to stipulate that they don't want their money to go to the Nader Youth. PIRG's use of the negative checkoff is disingenuous. Nader knows indifference pays off.

Last year when the trustees of Penn State University refused to accept the PIRG funding scheme and proposed instead a positive checkoff (*i.e.*, anyone who

COMING: how Public Broadcasting works, or whatever happened to Martin Agronsky?

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wants to give, gives), PennPIRG organizers rejected the alternative and went into a pout. A PIRG source told H.E. Logue, Jr. of *The Chronicle of Higher Education* that a positive checkoff would bring in, at most, $30,000 a year whereas the negative checkoff would gross $270,000 minus refunds. Ralph Nader reacted to the Penn State turndown by launching an investigation of conflicts of interest at Penn State and elsewhere and by denouncing Penn State as a "citadel of fascism."

Though Nader has autonomous PIRGs operating at, by one count, 145 colleges and universities, he and they are having trouble franchising the effort, because they keep running into administrators like Penn State's president John Oswald who claim to "have questions about an organization apparently dedicated on the one hand to improving the lot of the consumer, but on the other hand seemingly pushing for a funding system which will collect from students (consumers) who may be misinformed, uninformed, apathetic, etc." PIRGs are political organizations (not "partisan" politics, Nader continually reiterates, but *political* nonetheless). And they have political opposition, notably in the conservative Young Americans for Freedom, which routinely points out that PIRG funding practices are sleazy, undemocratic and falsely advertised. Charles L. Orndorff, of the Virginia YAF, noticed that a refund sometimes isn't really a refund: "At Portland State University in Oregon students received back only $.85 of the dollar that had been taken from them, the rest being deducted for administrative expenses."

Nader hasn't satisfactorily explained why he would not be content merely to have the majority of students on a campus who are hot for PIRG contribute to it and leave everybody else alone. Instead he performs a sonata on "absolute majority rule" and civic virtue. Last month he took his argument to the education subcommittee of the Senate Committee on Labor and Public Welfare. He asked Congress to compel institutions getting federal money to do what PIRG wants them to do—collect from all students whatever fees a majority of students ask to be collected, giving refunds to those who balk. Had the Nader amendment been law in 1975, the trustees of Penn State would have been powerless to protect minority rights as they did.

It currently looks as though this story will end well, though not for Nader. Kennedy and Cranston had introduced the flag-draped Nader amendment but evidently were not prepared for the strenuous reaction it got from universities and others arguing, as I do, that the PIRG funding scheme is a consumer abuse. In late May the senators gave the matter a second thought and withdrew the proposal.

David Sanford

Mr. Sanford's book, *Me & Ralph: Is Nader Unsafe for America?* will be published July 6 by The New Republic Book Company.

The Chancy Health Of Higher Education

by Chester E. Finn, Jr. & Terry W. Hartle

Is American higher education in trouble? One can virtually choose the answer he likes and find a recent report or study to support it. The City University of New York has temporarily closed its doors for want of funds, and will for the first time charge tuition. Celebrated Ivy League schools have deficits. Student recruiters are displacing admissions officers in many universities. From time to time a little known private college closes its doors and auctions off the remains. Yet picking up a newspaper, one also finds articles headlined "College Enrollments Rise 8.8 Percent, Greatest Surge Since the '60s" and "Private Colleges Said to be Doing Well." Gerald Ford's budget request for Fiscal 1977 includes a hike of 11 percent in funds for basic research. Some institutions are turning away hordes of eager applicants.

A year after a Carnegie Foundation report observed that higher education was undergoing "the greatest overall and long run state of decline in its history" another Carnegie volume concludes that it is in "comparatively good shape."

Appraising the health of higher education is more difficult than it ought to be. Contemporary studies reach seemingly opposite conclusions about the condition and future of academe. No source supplies consistent, reliable and useful data, nor can educators agree on the indices to be used. Budget deficits have dramatic impact, but often they reflect the quirks of the college's bookkeeping system and the policy decisions of its trustees rather than its true financial position. The demise of a college has an indisputable finality to it, but death rates have never been a wholly satisfactory gauge of health; besides, the industry enjoys births too, and HEW's tabulations list a larger number of functioning colleges and universities, both public and private, with every passing year. Enrollment statistics have pitfalls, too. Totals may soar while individual schools face half-filled freshman classes. But empty seats, while assuredly a vexing problem for the colleges, may themselves be the result of reckless expansion begun a decade ago and thus have a dubious claim to a place on the nation's list of urgent problems needing solution.

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Despite the confusion, five general observations can be ventured with some confidence.

First, the expansion that was the most prominent feature of American higher education for the past two decades has nearly ended. The reasons are simple: 400,000 *fewer* babies were born in 1965 than in 1955, hence there will be 400,000 fewer 18-year-olds in 1983 than in 1973. That this basic datum was identified a decade ago and yet largely ignored is a sad commentary on the perspicacity of the academy, but may be explained by recalling how hard the colleges were then struggling to accommodate the tidal wave of 18-year-olds who had been born in the late 1940s. Yet the size of the population from which students are drawn remains half of the iron law of enrollments. The second half—the percentage of the population that goes to college—has also shown a recent downward trend. In 1968, 55 percent of high school seniors enrolled in college the autumn after graduation; by 1974 the corresponding figure was 48 percent. While analysts offer many reasons for the dwindling number of college-bound high school graduates—the end of the draft, the rising cost of higher education, evidence that a college degree brings less economic gain than it used to—the fact remains that even were this decline to be arrested, there will be reduced enrollments in the years ahead. Thus the cheerier forecasts encountered today depend heavily for their optimism on the assumption that new populations will be tapped, notably that older persons will flock to the colleges and fill up seats. That's already happening: students over age 35 rose from five to 12 percent of college enrollments between 1970 and 1974. But most of this increase occurred in large urban universities, not in the rural private four-year liberal arts colleges eager for such new sources of revenue. Thus it remains to be seen how much the optimism is justified.

Second, most institutions of higher learning find their "standard of living" rising slowly if at all, certainly less than 10 years ago, and in many cases they must contend with an erosion in real resources per student. After years of income growth—several percentage points ahead of the inflation rate—the vogue phrase of the day is "steady state." At best, the increasing demand on resources complicates the life of college administrators struggling to allot funds to unionized instructors, scholarship funds, the vendors of such inflated but essential goods as fuel, books and scholarly journals, and the many other claimants to the institution's money. At worst, it forces painful retrenchment that menaces educational quality. The classic response to diminishing resources is increased productivity. But analysts have long asserted that education, like other labor-intensive service activities, should not be expected to show the productivity gains associated with industry. Willingly or not, many colleges have nevertheless found themselves forced to curb their spending expenditure growth. There is no way to know for sure when these cuts have eliminated the fat and are starting to slash at the vitals of the institutions.

Third, there are significant differences between the public and private sectors within higher education, and in the impacts that current trends have on them. The essential distinction for these purposes is financial: private colleges get most of their income from student tuition, while public institutions look to state appropriations for the bulk of their operating revenues. As costs have soared, private universities have hiked their tuition charges so much that the difference between what a student must pay to attend a private school and a comparable public one now averages $1700 a year and in some cases runs as high as $3500. Tuition and fees at the University of Connecticut, for example, are $765; at nearby Yale, they total $4050. Most state and federal scholarship programs remain insensitive to this price difference, typically delivering aid that comes far closer to meeting public college charges than private. Hence while total private sector enrollments this year are the largest ever, numerous schools must struggle to find applicants willing and able to pay the price, and some fear that the accelerating competition for a dwindling number of students in years ahead will force them to the brink of institutional disaster. To substantiate that gloomy forecast, spokesmen for private schools point out that while both private and public sectors have grown in the past quarter century, their "share" of enrollments has fallen from half to less than a quarter and that they are rapidly being eclipsed by their lower-priced rivals. (Why, it is plausibly asked, should a student from any but the wealthiest of families pay thousands of dollars to attend a private college when down the street virtually the same education is offered for much less?)

Fourth, public policy is in disarray. Although higher education appropriations continue to rise in every state—the national average for 1975-76 was 28 percent higher than two years before—austerity-minded governors and legislators have begun to press their universities to cut costs, to justify increases and, in some cases, to scrap programs. In many states, private colleges have also got their noses under the tent and are pushing for added assistance, but usually the price of aid is submission to far more stringent standards of public accountability than these schools find acceptable. At the federal level, despite outlays on post-secondary education that will total upwards of $12 billion in fiscal 1976, there is quite simply no such thing as a higher education policy. No agency or congressional committee oversees more than a fraction of the money being channelled through hundreds of disparate programs. Federal regulation, from civil rights enforcement to pension rules, operates in a wholly uncoordinated manner that is increasingly resented and resisted by the academy. Yet so fragmented is the

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federal role, and so specialized the responsibilities of individual officials, that dilemmas of great concern to educators have no specific audience among Washington policy makers. This absence of coherent public policies is compounded by higher education's traditional reluctance to enter the political arena. That attitude is fast-changing, however, as government pressures mount. Derek Bok warns that "one of Harvard's greatest problems in the next generation will involve its relationship with the federal government," and he has devoted his latest President's Report to a searching examination of that subject.

Fifth, American higher education has never shown much skill at systematic planning and organization. Individual colleges and universities sometimes handle their own affairs with impressive talent, but seldom do the aspirations of a single school yield to the sorts of decisions that might better serve the industry as a whole. The reckless over-expansion of graduate programs illustrates the dominance of intra-institutional dynamics in an area where some judicious parcelling-out of tasks and responsibilities would have been desirable. Why, the chairman wants to know, should his college refrain from establishing a graduate program in ancient Indian literature, just because other universities in the vicinity already have them or because some economist claims the nation is surfeited with Sanskrit scholars, when he can document student demand and faculty support for such courses of study. Although some impressive efforts at coordination are being made, every such move encounters resistance. Recent efforts by the New York State Board of Regents to eliminate superfluous and weak graduate programs have met with vigorous opposition by the State University of New York, whose own trustees have taken the Regents to court over what they regard as an illegal extension of state authority. A quarter century of growth equipped higher education splendidly to function when trend-lines point upward, but tough-minded choices that permit self-renewal in an era of retrenchment remain, for much of this ill-organized industry, a will-o'-the-wisp more talked about than accomplished.

Withal, some perspective is necessary. The historical cycle of ups and downs that has always plagued American higher education is still at work. The "golden years" of the late '50s and '60s were more a protracted phase than an enduring norm, although they are understandably the standard against which higher education measures its current condition. The demographic bulge that brought about the enrollment growth of that period was unprecedented; yet the graduates of the '60s will likely have children reaching college age in the '80s and '90s, and admissions offices may once again find themselves besieged.

Such cycles can pass with stunning speed, however, thereby complicating efforts to fathom events in a long range context. Many of today's gloomy pronouncements about higher education are rooted in the brief but vivid downturn around 1970, when enrollments dipped, deficits grew and Earl Cheit proclaimed the onset of a "New Depression in Higher Education." But the situation has changed markedly in five years. Administrators acted with dispatch, cutting costs, boosting income and recruiting students such that although some institutions face a difficult financial situation today, for the industry as a whole the new depression has been replaced by what Cheit a few years later termed "fragile stability." A still more positive view was offered in 1975 by Howard Bowen and John Minter. Examining a sample of private liberal arts colleges and universities—a category widely held to be in peril—they found three quarters of them in sound financial condition and they lauded the private sector as a whole for its remarkable "staying power." Many assumed that more recent data would yield fresh signs of deterioration, but Bowen and Minter are about to publish a follow-up study that finds continued "stability without stagnation" in private higher education.

Yet such upbeat conclusions may prove as fleeting as the gloom of 1970. If three quarters of private colleges are in good shape, one quarter are not. Enrollments are generally up, but no one can say how much of the recent spurt may be traced to the scarcity of job alternatives in a period of economic travail. In general, state support is increasing, but a boost for the community colleges may be matched by straitened circumstances for the research universities—and the continued expansion of public institutions may worsen the problem for private colleges. As if to dramatize the point, *The Chronicle of Higher Education* last week placed a cheery headline introducing the latest Carnegie study under a large photo of "The Last Commencement" at a private junior college in Boston that is closing its doors. That other schools may face a similar fate is the implication of a recent report by the American Council on Education which found that 34 percent of the nation's private colleges and universities operated in the red in 1974-5, that expenditures per student are declining and administrative costs rising at a disturbing rate.

The ambiguity of the current condition, the press' need to simplify each successive report for popular consumption, higher education's uninspiring record in discerning long-run trends and conducting itself accordingly, and the mounting suspicion that some educators' plaints may be a bit self-serving, all conspire to confuse the situation. Lacking a bona fide crisis, public policy toward higher education will likely remain murky and ambivalent. Our government seems to work best when a clearly defined crisis is dropped in its lap and for the most part, the condition of American higher education does not meet that criterion. Yet it would be well to keep looking ahead, conscious of ominous demographic and enrollment trends.

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The (Latest) West Point Cheating Scandal

Obeisance to an Ideal

by Robert Moore & Joseph Ellis

In recent months West Point has been hit by the most serious and most publicized honor scandal in its history. About 25 second classmen (juniors) are being investigated for possible cheating on a graded barracks-study assignment in electrical engineering. Extensive media coverage has given voice to demands that the Academy justify itself. To many Americans the Military Academy exemplifies moral and ethical values preserved by mechanisms as simple as an honor code requiring that "a cadet will not lie, cheat or steal or tolerate those who do." The code is reinforced by a system that demands expulsion for any violation. Certainly, a cheating incident at a civilian college would not have received continual front-page coverage in *The New York Times* or elicited widespread editorial concern.

It is not the fact that cheating exists at West Point, nor the large number of cadets who have been accused in this latest incident, which jeopardizes West Point's public image as a bastion of integrity. There have been three publicized scandals at West Point in the last 25 years (in 1951, 90 cadets were dismissed, 37 of them members of the football team; in 1966, 42 cadets were dismissed; and in 1973, 21 cadets were dismissed). Rather it is the adamant refusal of almost 90 percent of the "found" cadets to resign and their attempts to implicate scores of their classmates as honor violators that starkly illustrates the failure of West Point's institutional authority to prevail in what were once sacrosanct matters.

The honor code and the system for implementing it are now being rejected by a substantial number of cadets. Only four of the 52 men found guilty of cheating by cadet honor boards in April have quit. The remaining 48 "found" cadets got lawyers (drawn from the Academy's Law Department and from civilian life) and appealed to officer review boards. If a board finds a cadet guilty, his case is referred to the Academy superintendent. If he approves the guilty verdict, it is forwarded to the Secretary of the Army who has the authority to dismiss a cadet from West Point.

As rumors of widespread cheating spread, attention focused on a statement by Cadet Timothy Ringgold to Under Secretary of the Army Norman Augustine that "roughly one-third of my class (junior class) cheated and the other two-thirds tolerated it." By mid-May reports of rampant cheating and attempts at Academy cover-ups were getting almost daily press attention. On May 24, Academy Superintendent Lt. Gen. Sidney Berry took the extraordinary step of creating an internal review panel of three officers and two cadets to act in the place of the cadet honor committee in investigating 70 to 90 new cases of suspected cheating. "The Supe and DA (Department of the Army) definitely have doubts about the honor committee," admitted one West Point officer. "In the current context, it's a myth that the honor code belongs to the cadets. The Supe is obliged to quit playing that game and take charge."

But Gen. Berry's attempt to take charge did not contain the scandal. Congressman Thomas Downey, the 27-year-old New York Democratic member of the House Armed Services Committee, conducted a quick inquiry and suggested that some 200 more cadets may have cheated on the electrical engineering exam. By May 28 Gen. Berry had been forced to expand the one internal review panel of five members to five panels involving almost twenty members (the majority of whom are officers), and he ordered the junior class to remain at the Academy after the June 2 graduation. By the end of May it was apparent that the 48 cadets and their lawyers were trying to force the Academy either to prosecute hundreds of alleged honor violators, thus decimating the corps' rising senior class, or to acquit everyone on the grounds that the honor code is a farce. On June 1 Gen. Berry's internal review panels formally charged 46 additional juniors with cheating, and Cadet Timothy Ringgold filed suit in federal court seeking elimination of the honor code.

In the swirl of events it is hard to speak definitively about essential issues. To most West Pointers, however, there is only one pertinent question: Did these cadets cheat? But, to the cadets who have already been "found" by the cadet honor committee and to the scores of others who may be convicted by the newly established internal review committees, the relevant question is: Should we be held accountable for actions that are commonplace in the corps?

The basic legitimacy of the honor code is also under attack. As one exasperated faculty member said, "This was a minor exercise. 'Juice' (jargon for electrical engineering courses) is not a favorite subject of cadets

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and to many of those guys it was just a matter of getting the goddamn thing done. It was just another hurdle to get over on the way to other subjects most of 'em were more interested in."

Another West Pointer noted, "A pervasive implication of the honor code is that if someone is dishonest in one thing he will be dishonest in another, but I'm not sure that's true. . . ."

These comments do not deal with the guilt or innocence of given cadets; but with the very basis of the honor system. The Academy and the Department of the Army, however, are unalterably opposed to tying the guilt or innocence of the cadets to any investigation of the system. In early May, the cadets' attorneys had asked the Army to conduct such an inquiry, and the answer was no.

The arbitrary simplicity of the Army's response obscures some interesting machinations. In addressing their request to Army Secretary Martin Hoffmann, the plaintiffs hoped for a favorable reply. Unlike their immediate predecessors, neither Hoffmann nor Gen. Fred Weyand, Army Chief of Staff, are West Point graduates. Both men came to their jobs serendipitously, Weyand upon the untimely death of Creighton Abrams, and Hoffmann when Bo Callaway became President Ford's campaign manager. But, on May 19, Secretary Hoffmann refused the attorneys' request.

The decision particularly reflected the view of the Judge Advocate General, Maj. Gen. W. B. Persons, Jr. Gen. Persons, a West Point and Harvard Law graduate, saw the request as a lawyer's delaying tactic and he argued that the normal West Point procedures should go forward. Gen. Persons also knew that despite the public agitation over West Point's honor cases, recent court rulings were clearly on the side of the Academy. The cadet honor boards and the internal review committees are not required to grant due process to cadets who are being prosecuted for honor violations.

Compared with other traditions, the honor system is an innovation that was adopted long after many civilian colleges had instituted student-run honor councils. An ad hoc group of cadets known as the Vigilance Committee was set up around 1897 and conducted covert honor trials for 25 years before Gen. Douglas MacArthur, then head of the Academy, gave it official recognition in 1922 as "the authoritative voice of the corps."

In an institution that allows little room for individual freedom and demands obedience to standards of conduct imposed from above, the honor system is an anomaly. It is the only one of the various "systems" at West Point not based on a pessimistic estimate of human nature; the honor system assumes that each cadet can recognize right from wrong and can act correctly without coercion from superiors. Furthermore, the honor system is the only facet of Academy life that has traditionally been completely under cadet control. All of the cadet honor representatives are elected by their fellows. During an honor trial a 12-man board reviews the evidence, hears testimony, then votes. As extra-legal, ad hoc organizations, the cadet honor boards are free to adopt whatever procedures they wish. According to custom, a unanimous verdict is necessary for conviction. Also according to custom, the sole punishment is dismissal. (The Naval and Air Force Academies have more lenient systems.) A convicted cadet may resign or he may appeal the decision to a board of West Point officers. Only after the case has been appealed to the officer review board does the defendant come under the constitutional protections mandated by the Uniform Code of Military Justice. And if the officer review board overturns a conviction, the cadet honor committee has periodically voted to "silence" the reprieved cadet, meaning that the entire corps is asked to refuse to converse or associate with him except in the course of official duties.

During the summer of 1975 Cadet Steven Verr, a plebe, was tried and convicted of lying. Verr told an upperclassman, who asked him why he was crying, that his parents had been injured in an automobile accident. In fact, Verr's tears were a response to the emotional and physical strain of "Beast Barracks" (plebe indoctrination). In March his conviction was overturned by Gen. Sidney Berry. Berry's decision demonstrated the limitations not only of the honor system but of the honor code as well. Berry, a stern and forbidding man, refused to sanction the expulsion of Cadet Verr. According to an Army attorney, "Gen. Berry believes lying *is lying when* it is an intentional telling of an untruth coupled with the intent to deceive. Like many of us, he thinks Verr is a strange guy who probably doesn't belong at West Point; but, he just doesn't believe it was Verr's intention to deceive." Since Gen. Berry's decision, Verr allegedly has been silenced, subjected to physical abuse and threats have been made on his life. Verr's attorney, Capt. Arthur Lincoln, has made public statements critical of the treatment his client got from the cadet honor committee.

Although internal stresses and inconsistencies within the honor code system are primarily responsible for the current Academy difficulties, the public behavior of notable West Pointers may also have had its effect. What lessons are impressionable cadets to draw from the remarkable career of Alexander Haig? Haig retired from the military to become Richard Nixon's principal aide and ardent defender in the later cover-up

COMING: the war
of the Arabs—
by David Pryce-Jones

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years. In Nixon's final days Haig moved adroitly to save himself and help unseat an obviously doomed Commander-in-Chief. Partly out of gratitude for Haig's efforts, President Ford called him back into military service and gave him command of US forces in Europe, which also made him Supreme Allied Commander in Europe. President Ford's actions forced the able and popular Gen. Andy Goodpaster into an early retirement. Other Nixon administration West Pointers such as Fred Buzhardt, Fred Malek and Bo Callaway have not appreciably enhanced West Pointers' reputation for veracity or scrupulous stewardship of the public trust. Callaway's recent difficulties with his Colorado ski resort led the *Army Times* to reluctantly editorialize that his use of "official stationery and his Pentagon office to conduct private business" demonstrated that "he is, at a minimum, guilty of serious misjudgement."

West Point officers don't seem particularly troubled by the career patterns of Haig, Callaway and others. In fact, they acknowledge that the absolute strictures of the honor code do not extend to the Army at large. That's just as well because there is scant evidence from the Vietnam years that the code noticeably affected West Pointer service in Southeast Asia. Few officers protested falsified body counts and claims about "pacified" zones. Some, such as Maj. Gen. Samuel Koster, who resigned as West Point superintendent because of involvement in the coverup of the My Lai massacre, brought particular discredit to the Academy.

The West Point Honor Code is more an exercise in nostalgia than an operational ethic. A 1957 graduate remembered: "Living under the code is like having apprehended a Platonic form. Even though you get but faint copies of it the rest of your life, you treasure the experience of it you once knew." Whether the experience produces Army officers less inclined to dishonorable actions than ROTC or OCS graduates is not as clear as West Pointers would have one believe.

What West Point now wants most is to be left alone to deal with its problems in its own way. What West Point most needs is an independent inquiry by a civilian panel staffed by competent investigators who are armed with grants of immunity for witnesses. The grants of immunity are critical, for as a West Point officer observed, "You can't find out the truth and concurrently punish the same man for telling you the truth."

Taking a Dim View Of Humphrey-Hawkins

by Melville J. Ulmer

The current shibboleth of Democratic liberalism is the Humphrey-Hawkins bill for "Balanced Growth and Full Employment," now awaiting a vote in Congress. It has had the support, at one time or another, of every recent or surviving candidate for the Democratic presidential nomination, as well as nearly all those seeking seats in the Senate and the House. Some, such as Morris Udall, have been ardent and vocal advocates. Others, like Jimmy Carter, have responded cryptically but affirmatively when directly questioned. For, from a Democratic standpoint, if you're for full employment, you're for Humphrey-Hawkins—and therefore for the huge public jobs program it provides. The argument, especially for those who have never read the bill, sounds convincing.

Since virtually all Democrats take the same litmus test and fly the same flag, the political primaries prove nothing about the bill's political significance. The test will come after the conventions. For then Humphrey-Hawkins will be a fair target for Republican attack. If, as I believe, the bill is easier to hit than a sore-armed pitcher with a hangover, the result would be devastating. It could prove to be the counterpart for 1976 candidates of the share-the-wealth program that sank George McGovern in 1972.

The great attraction of the Humphrey-Hawkins bill is that it starts with one of the important truths of our time—one that I have been shouting from rooftops for nearly 10 years: that is, that "aggregate monetary and fiscal policies are inadequate by themselves to achieve full employment and to restrain inflation." But once hopes are raised, they are quickly dashed. For despite the obviously noble motivations of its authors, the Humphrey-Hawkins bill contains the seeds of its own

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frustration. It doesn't ever confront the central economic problem it has presumably set out to solve.

That central problem, proved time and again by experience, is the fundamental conflict between the goals of full employment and price stability. It is reflected in the three-phase pattern of what may be called the roller coaster economy. And that pattern has been imprinted in our economic history ever since Keynesian stabilization techniques were adopted in this country (informally at first) shortly after World War II. The three phases are *recovery, expansion* and *recession.* The first two are typically supported by a substantial tax cut, as is the current upswing. They are also characterized by an inflation that cumulates alarmingly in the second phase. In the third, a recession is induced to fight the inflation, with higher taxes and interest rates doing the "inducing." By now, this sequence of events is as familiar to Americans as the changing of the seasons. So is the disturbing observation that the ups and downs of the roller coaster have grown progressively more extreme and less controllable. But unfortunately, the authors of Humphrey-Hawkins give no evidence that they share this common knowledge.

The provisions of the bill, in effect, would simply generate a great economic expansion by huge expenditures on public employment, superimposed on an economy already established in a fairly firm expansion. Politically, that's like feeding children three-course meals of ice cream, cake and candy. The economy would be sickened unless protected by specific, responsible safeguards against inflation. Were the Humphrey-Hawkins bill enacted as it stands, even if the economy were weak, it would probably stimulate a more spectacular price advance than that of World War II. In the end it would not only fail to help persons now unemployed, but would add new recruits to the army of the poor. First on line would be another of those flamboyantly overlooked sectors of the population—the industrious men and women, now getting on in years, who thought they had provided savings and pensions for a comfortable retirement, only to find that the purchasing power of their incomes was less than enough to keep them properly fed. Nothing now in the bill offers the slightest hope of avoiding an inflationary debacle.

Indeed the bill seems married to a traditional and clearly outdated misconception of why prices rise. For example, it promises to restrain "inflation when total demand threatens to exceed the nation's capabilities at full employment." That unrealistically simplified objective provides its own elementary textbook solution: just stop demand from exceeding the full employment level. But the central problem of our times is that severe inflation sets in long *before* we get to full employment, that it becomes so intense every time the economy expands that we never do get to full employment. The questions the Humphrey-Hawkins bill *should* confront are: Why does premature inflation develop? What can be done to stop it?

There are two related reasons that premature inflation always arises, so that corrective recessions—six in the last 27 years—have been a periodic, practical necessity. The first relates to the power of oligopolistic industry and labor unions. Their role in inflation is often discussed as though both—big business and unions—were in an antisocial conspiracy. Actually, the situation is more serious. In the economic setting provided in the years since World War II, they have simply followed their own interests, rationally. In a presidential address before the American Economic Association last year, Robert A. Gordon remarked that "we economists pay too little attention to the *changing* institutional environment that conditions economic behavior." The observation is well taken. The critical change in the postwar economic history of the US was the systematic adoption of Keynesian techniques for economic stabilization, the attempt to smooth business cycles through fiscal policy. It meant, at least so far as people have been able to see, that declines in business activity would never again be allowed to progress very far or last very long. That conviction was bound to influence the behavior of business and labor, as it indisputably has.

In a word, oligopolistic industry and organized labor have both learned, as Wall Street puts it, to "look across the valley." When business activity declines temporarily, there is virtually no inducement to lower prices and wages in order to maintain volume. Instead business and labor are preoccupied throughout with preparations for the next recovery. There is an eagerness, an alertness on the part of oligopolists to preserve industry discipline (which means *not* lowering prices) and to maintain and increase the industry's share in the GNP (which means *increasing* prices)—especially since demand usually becomes inelastic during downturns. For its part, each union is determined to maintain if not improve the purchasing power of its members in recession, and with prices still rising, and given the equal determination of all other unions, this means raising wages as much and as often as opportunity allows. Such attitudes inculcate an inflationary psychology that spreads and intensifies like a contagious disease. However explained, the evidence is unmistakable. The common phenomenon of business firms and unions raising wages and prices even when output is falling, is familiar to all. Their magnified aggressiveness, as soon as conditions improve, is equally familiar.

There is only one conceivable, effective response to this situation. The federal government must have the standby power, and the will, to impose mandatory controls on prices and wages whenever the behavior of an industry or a union clearly contravenes the public interest. With reasonable planning, this can be done

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without thwarting the allocative functions of supply and demand, and without placing the economy in a straightjacket. The empty gesture of the Nixon administration toward wage-price controls, and the timid, half-hearted efforts of the Kennedy-Johnson years, should not be taken as evidence to the contrary.

The second reason for premature inflation lies in a structural imbalance in the supply and demand for labor. It arises from a critical split in the labor force (I'm not referring to females versus males, or blacks versus whites, since 75 to 80 percent of the unemployed generally are white). The split has to do with the level of skills. A large part of the labor force remains virtually unaffected by recessions. The reader can verify this by examining Bureau of Labor Statistics data on unemployment rates by occupation. The jobless rates remain at one, two or two-and-a-half percent in recessions for nearly all skilled workers, professionals, administrators, technicians and government employees. You can tell this also by noting stories in *The Wall Street Journal*, reporting severe shortages of what is always considered a surprising variety of skills, even during our worst recessions. Meanwhile, of course, among the unskilled and the semiskilled, unemployment rates during downturns are anywhere between two and four times the national average.

Now, when we use the famed Keynesian techniques for expanding demand and employment, we create *over*full employment in markets for the more skilled workers, the technicians, professionals and other favored personnel—an inflationary situation in these markets in which jobs are chasing men and women. At the same time, the unskilled and the semiskilled are helped only modestly. Hence, one essential step toward providing full employment without inflation is the one proposed by Humphrey-Hawkins—that is, to give the unemployed jobs in the public sector. The less skilled workers never are, and under present circumstances never can be, fully employed in the private sector except under the most inflationary conditions.

But public employment is expensive, even after allowing for offsetting savings in unemployment insurance and the like. It would unleash a flood of spending in private business markets with an inflationary impact that could not possibly be contained by mandatory price-wage controls acting alone. Therefore, there must be a definite directive, now lacking, in Humphrey-Hawkins about tax policy. Taxes should be adjusted at all times to a level sufficient to maintain price stability. In the presence of a public employment program guaranteeing opportunities to work, that tax objective is thoroughly feasible, and essential.

In practice, in the present situation, it would probably mean financing the entire net costs of public employment by a tax increase. That would admittedly be a bitter pill for the public, but medicine of that kind has been swallowed before when the public had faith in its efficacy and purpose. That faith is not likely to be engendered by Humphrey-Hawkins as it's now written. If the responsibilities linking the individual and society run in both directions, one would never know it from Humphrey-Hawkins. The opportunities, protections and guarantees to be given the unemployed are described in glowing detail. Nothing is said about the reciprocal obligation to give a week's work for a week's pay. Nor is any other assurance given that the public employment will be truly productive and carefully directed toward those high priority needs that still remain unfulfilled in the public sector. To make matters worse, the wage rates stipulated in the bill could run so high, according to one manpower expert, that as many as 10 million men and women would be induced to leave private jobs to work on the generous public projects provided by Humphrey-Hawkins. Potentially fatal, and even ridiculous, as they are, however, such deficiencies can be remedied without altering the bill's principal objective and basic philosophy.

However, if it is to be taken seriously, Humphrey-Hawkins will need to undergo not mere patching, but major surgery. Along with its promise that adult unemployment will be reduced to three percent within four years, the bill must contain a second guarantee—that the annual increase in the consumer price index will be reduced to a maximum of two percent within four years. To satisfy that objective it will have to provide for mandatory, selective wage-price controls plus the appropriate tax policy. A program of that kind would offer the only promise there can be of getting what we have never had—full employment without inflation.

Two weeks ago, in testimony before the Senate Banking Committee, I suggested amendments to the Humphrey-Hawkins bill. John Kenneth Galbraith offered almost identical proposals for the same reasons. They were accepted with approval by the committee's free-spirit chairman, William Proxmire. Even so, the prognosis for the Humphrey-Hawkins bill is dismal. For its authors, its sponsors, and probably most other Democrats, the possibility of higher taxes is an unmentionable in an election year. Even the whisper of wage-price controls, no matter how selective and conditional, is considered a mortal threat for a party cherishing labor's support. Hence the prospect is that Humphrey-Hawkins will be passed in more or less its present form by the House, passed by the Senate, and vetoed by the President.

Call it naïveté or cynicism, but Democratic leaders seem to be exhilarated by that prospect. They will be the good guys, striving gallantly for full employment. Republicans will be the bad guys, rejecting it. The underlying assumption, that you can fool all of the people all of the time, is what I believe will boomerang. Democratic strategy like that could make fourth-rate Republican campaign managers look like geniuses.

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Arts and Lives

Stanley Kauffmann on theater

Molehills

Streamers (Newhouse). The American theater may be short on lots of things, but one gift it's loaded with—the ability to make mountains out of molehills. A current playwriting molehill is David Rabe. Now that he has written a play that is not as artily imitative in form, not as rankly jejune and shallow as were, in varying degree, *The Basic Training of Pavlo Hummel, Sticks and Bones, The Orphan* and *In the Boom Boom Room*, he is hailed as near-Olympian and garlanded further with prizes. *Streamers* is called his best play and the best American play of the season. Both of those things may in fact be true; but they strike me as mournful.

Rabe has some ability to write dialogue (although it wavers: see below). He has some instinct for dramatic action and for the revelation of character through contest. But that's like saying of a painter that he understands perspective and can turn form with color. *Then* what? To begin with Rabe's fundamental lack, which would govern even if he were technically and stylistically more accomplished, he has no insights deeper than those of his audience. And his artistic gifts are insufficient to turn his commonplace percepts into strong dramatic emblems for us so that, even if he didn't enlighten, he could at least fix memorably what we've seen for ourselves. Rabe asks for our attention to tell us what we already know about ourselves and our society, and he puts what he has to say in very earnest but rickety form.

In *Streamers* he has at least abjured second-hand expressionism, bloated neo-classicism, melodramatic physical images. It's a linear play in realistic mode. Of course this doesn't preclude symbolism, of an internal "literary" kind, and Rabe hurries to exercise this option, beginning with the title. "Streamers" are paratroopers whose parachutes don't open. This play is set in an Army barracks in 1965, but it's not about paratroopers. So, you see—you quickly see—the title is symbolic.

The play opens with a young soldier who has cut his wrists and is hustled out. As it gradually becomes clear that he's not going to be seen again, we realize that he's been laid on us to prefigure something. This is symptomatic of Rabe's technique: over and over we can see him portentously making deposits for future check-writing.

The three regular occupants of the barracks room on stage are a black man, submissive to routine, and two whites, one of whom is campy, the other "straight." All are being trained for Vietnam. These three are often visited by another black who is menacing, rebellious, unhappy. Under the pressures of alienation from normal life, three of the men alter. The campy one is revealed as truly homosexual. He insists that the "straight" is fighting the latent homosexuality that's in him, and the "straight" begins to be frightened. The maverick black, desperate for pleasure as a narcotic, tries to have sex with the homosexual in the barracks room before the others. When the "straight" interferes, terrible knife violence follows. This is followed by a long, stagily quiet coda whose materials have been heavily planted earlier.

The key incidents have the smell of matters that Rabe himself saw or heard of in the army, that greatly disturbed him, and that he wanted to make some statement about. But he has merely pushed some accidents into a sack. (Whether they are based on his experience or not, they are just accidents of occurrence.) He wants us to think of the purposeless horror of Vietnam hanging over the heads of these men, but the things he describes could have happened—surely did happen—in the barracks of such a different conflict as World War II. He wants us to feel how the ripping of young life into the disequilibriums of the Army results in havoc: but what we see could have happened in the merchant marine. The incidents in the play remain accidents. The two stories—of homosexual tension, of black disquiet—are arbitrarily pushed together, as if there were some real relation between psychosexual drama and racial bitterness; and the two are hurriedly married at the end by a sheerly insane violent act, unfounded in character, only prefigured by the playwright *outside* these characters (that opening touch of blood).

Outstanding amidst the gimmicks banked for later reference is "Beautiful Streamers," a paratroopers' song given to us early by two drunken old professional-army sergeants. (The tune is Foster's "Beautiful Dreamer.") We get it early, so that we can get it late—in that painful coda—a big windy metaphor which we are supposed to accept as Poetry without question. But what does it symbolize? What does the symbol of an unopened parachute mean to anything we have seen? Alternatively, what would an "opened parachute" have been in any of the lives we have seen tangled?

Rabe's dialogue is equally unsteady. Much of the time it's limber, sometimes quite breezy in a barracks-chat way; but he can't resist Poetry here either. One of the old boozers, describing a jump, talks about "an unexpected and terrible wind," about a chute that "opened like a tulip." As for clichés, you can actually hear the phrase "mad as a hatter" in this play.

Dorian Harewood gives a fair copy of what can by now be called the stock "dangerous black" performance. Peter Evans camps with some felicity as the gradually revealed homosexual. Paul Rudd is all right as the bewildered "straight." Rudd is himself an example of possible molehill-elevation. He made some success as the chauffeur in the late TV series "Beacon Hill," then in the New York season he did passably in *Ah, Wilderness,* unpassably in *The Glass Menagerie.* Now he is scheduled to play Henry V in Central Park this summer and Romeo in the fall. Next spring perhaps Oedipus and Lear? I wish him well, but, hoping that I'm wrong, I don't

Films Worth Seeing

All the President's Men. Admirable try with tough material for film. Anyway, we bring much of the excitement *with* us.

Face to Face. Liv Ullmann at her best, though not Ingmar Bergman at his, in this exploration of "normality."

One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest. Specious mental-hospital allegory, but Jack Nicholson is immense.

Robin and Marian. In the mood for romantic flapdoodle about a maturer Robin Hood? Anyway it's well acted and directed.

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so far perceive the reasons for his advancement, let alone the rush about it.

Streamers was directed by Mike Nichols, first at the Long Wharf in New Haven, then (with a cast change) at Joseph Papp's Newhouse in New York. I have never seen the thrust stage used more adroitly. But though Nichols grows no less deft, he does grow less interesting, in his choices, in his shrinking compass.

The Runner Stumbles (Little). Here is still another instance of our theater's frenzy to push a writer merely because he is serious and is not completely devoid of ability. Milan Stitt's play had a "showcase" presentation at the Manhattan Theater Club, then a production at the Hartman in Stamford, and now has been brought to Broadway. All those votes of confidence have been given to a work that—if one could imagine it as a novel—would get a "let us see your next" letter from a good publisher.

The play deals with love between a priest and a nun in raw north Michigan at the turn of the century (suggested by an actual murder case). The love is unconsummated. After a stormy scene the nun is found dead, the priest is accused. His innocence is established at the end, but it could easily have been done at the beginning.

It's all accoutered in fussy dramaturgy—flashing back and forward from the trial to the events discussed—which cannot conceal the fact that we know from the beginning that the nun and priest will eventually reveal their mutual love and that the play has nothing else to reveal. Stitt makes much heavy weather about views of God and service being clarified en route, but it's only padding on a thin story. Once again a tender of seriousness in a playwright, genuine though the tender is, has been accepted as genuine seriousness.

Stephen Joyce, one of our better actors who is not yet fully appreciated, is forceful and flawless as the priest. The director Austin Pendleton has laid out the play well, but has permitted rough edges in some performances.

The Fermi National Laboratory

While advocates of the marriage of art and technology go marching down the aisle, dragging the venerable muse toward an alliance with the appropriated machinery of modern technology, whom should they meet coming in the opposite direction but physicist Robert E. Wilson, designer and director of the Fermi National Laboratory at Batavia, Illinois, offering his creation—one of the largest, most complex, and sophisticated instruments of scientific research on earth—as his version of that improbable consummation in which technology has become one with art. The inadvertent beauty of functional machines has long been widely noted, but Wilson, while responding to the rigorous necessities of efficiency and experimental precision, has, in addition, consciously designed his laboratory in every particular and on a gigantic scale to satisfy his own esthetic predilections. This rare combination of artistic and scientific aspiration, implemented by unlimited access to the most potent and intricate tools of modern technology, has produced a hybrid creation unprecedented in the history of art or science.

Wilson has an international reputation as an experimental physicist and as an inventive creator of atom-smashing systems. He was a charter member of that group of marked men who met on the pine-scented mesas at Los Alamos during World War II to design and construct the world's first atom bomb. It was Wilson who climbed the tower at Alamagordo in the dead of night to check final preparations before the release of that first fireball and mushroom cloud. After the war, he taught at Princeton and Harvard, finally settled at Cornell where he put together a 12-GeV. (Giga, or one thousand million electron volts) synchrotron laboratory that has been acclaimed by his peers as a model of ingenious efficiency. Known in his field as an unorthodox but stubborn genius, in 1968 Wilson was asked by the Atomic Energy Commission to give his opinion of the "Berkeley" plan then being considered for a new national atomic laboratory facility. He bluntly informed the commission that he could design and

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build a more efficient accelerator for less money. Finally he was invited to submit his own proposal and came up with a conventional configuration that was both technically daring and economical. After contending with his professional rivals, coping with bureaucratic obstructions from the AEC, congressional cross-examination and other such obstacles, Wilson was eventually given the assignment, provided with $250 million and granted baronial power to build his instrument of atomic research.

In a relatively short time his crew of physicists, engineers, architects, laborers and artists had burrowed tunnels under the prairie soil, formed lakes, built laboratories, designed and constructed intricate instruments and beautified the entire ensemble. However, there were moments when his creation appeared to be a total loss (while his more conservative colleagues from Geneva to Berkeley contemplated his dilemmas with varying degrees of dismay and satisfaction). At one point the magnetic system seemed irreparably damaged by damp. In another crisis, when a minute filament of stainless steel became lodged somewhere in the four-mile underground ring and interfered with the path of the beam, a ferret was induced to crawl through the inaccessible reaches of the tube dragging its custodial equipment on a string. Wilson braved his way through all these difficulties and had his creation functioning ahead of schedule. It has cost less than the original estimate and, though incomplete, has already achieved a phenomenal 400 GeV. level (as compared with 30 GeV. at Brookhaven National Laboratory and 30 GeV. at CERN in Switzerland). Not content with this, Wilson is currently seeking support for a plan to extend the capacity of his lab to 1000 GeV. and, as usual, is meeting with firm opposition from some of his scientific brethren.

Wilson once wrote an article for *Scientific American* suggesting that the greater accelerator laboratories of our day might be regarded by future generations as meaning what Gothic cathedrals mean in part to us—the highest examples of communal purpose, technological development and esthetic achievement. Acting on this far-fetched assumption, he has designed his atom-smashing instruments not only to probe the outer limits of knowledge but to be visually rewarding as well. Such a notion puts a strain on conventional preconceptions about the nature of both science and art. Can scientific expectations of proof and predictable repetition of experiments be squared with the subjective ambiguities of art? If there is a conflict between the two, which necessity prevails in the design decision? Are the unexplained mysteries of modern physics as paradoxical as the ambivalent imagery and equivocal spatial definitions of modern art? Therefore, do relative standards obtain equally in both realms? Wilson has long believed that scientific and artistic creativity are part of the same phenomenon—the intuitive or rational leap to new insights, forms or structures. He sees his artistic and scientific efforts as inseparable.

By now Wilson's grand design is nearly complete. A colony of world-renowned physicists occupies a village of white-painted, transplanted and remodeled farm houses; a herd of buffalo roam the sight; wild prairie grasses have been planted to return the land to its natural ground cover; and the ensemble sits there, an island of intense Celebration and high Civilization amidst the suburban semirural expanses of northern Illinois.

From O'Hare International Airport the approach to the Fermi Laboratory runs along a superhighway lined with competitive modern structures, all desperately trying by some novel device of fenestration, substance or form to make a distinctive architectural statement amidst that typical American outskirts-of-town confusion. Eventually the route dwindles into a simple two-way road that passes through vague, unfocused suburban settlements and then moves into the open-country space of the 7000 acres that surround the Fermi Laboratory. With no other architectural competition on that open flat farm land, the 16-story office building of the complex looms up from afar (not unlike Chartres riding serenely over the wheat fields of the Beauce) as a structure of some symbolic and functional import. This highrise unit, by deliberate coincidence the same height as the cathedral at Beauvais, sits on the northern perimeter of the site and serves as a focus for the ensemble.

In the rudimentary terms of function and form, Wilson's creation consists of a precast-concrete underground circular tunnel one mile and a quarter in diameter that houses a small, cylindrical metal tube enveloped by auxiliary machinery and mounted on delicately adjusted supports. This hollow circular ring passes between the poles of a thousand powerful magnets symmetrically distributed around the ring, and is tangentially connected to the generative and terminal ends of the complex. Along an initial tangent, atomic particles are injected at high energy into the ring. The magnets then bend the trajectories of these minute entities of matter so that they follow the circular path. On each successive revolution of the ring, they receive large amounts of energy from a high voltage contrivance and are accelerated to fantastic speeds, until eventually they are whirled off the circuit along selected tangents that fan out to various labs where the particles are brought into controlled collisions with a target such as a bar of iron, copper or berylium, or a cup of liquid hydrogen in the expectation that at least some of them will meet up with, and for a brief moment, shatter the known subatomic components into even more basic components. At present the focus of research is the behavior of the mysterious "quarks." However, with the unprecedented energies now circling the ring, ultimate discoveries on the structure of the universe are possible or imminent. These subatomic events occur behind massive blocks of radioactive-proof lead shields, are monitored by electronic devices, and the behavior of the minute particles under the stress of bombardment is observed, recorded and studied. The ring and tangent connections are buried under an earthen berm dense enough to contain harmful radiation. Above ground, the interior rim of the berm is flanked by a moat of air-cooled water. Adjacent to the subterranean magnetic installations, fountains that are lined up at right angles to the circular path of the moat send up jets of water in rhythmic rise and fall, responding to the cooling needs of the machinery under ground, so that the sight and sound of moving water is a pervasive feature of the ensemble. Inside the perimeter of the ring and nearby the highrise structure is a handsome auditorium designed by Wilson. Outside the ring are various support structures, laboratories and electrical installations.

A kind of school-boy resourcefulness and Yankee know-how are brought to bear on design problems. The basic precast concrete forms used to build the shell of the ring are employed in a completely different context to become the walls of the auditorium. The roof of one lab is made of left-over bisected steel culvert casings. To construct the walls of a small polyhydron lab, open-ended cast-off tin cans are encased in colored lucite panels to form an ornamental and

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transluscent skin for the structure. The power poles that bring in electrical energy to feed the lab's insatiable needs were designed by Wilson, as was the formwork for the reinforced concrete structure of the office building, and even the coffee tables of the lounge were planned under the director's eye. Both indoor and outdoor public areas are animated by free-standing sculpture (also designed by Wilson), and many of the opaque surfaces of the complex are painted in a rainbow range of high-intensity colors. The scientific effectiveness of Wilson's design now seems assured; the esthetic aspects of his creation invite critical scrutiny.

The dominant highrise office building is situated on artifically raised ground and approached along a causeway lined up on center axis with the building and flanked by two sizable free-form lakes. This quasi-formal approach arouses expectations of grandeur, but terminates ingloriously in a parking lot, so that Wilson's cathedral of science seems to rise up from a foundation of fat, multi-colored American automobiles, interspersed with academic Peugeots and Audis. The abstract concept of this edifice is theatrical and employs two massive arcs that emerge from the ground on a path counter to the earth's curvature. They bend toward one another but do not touch as they gradually straighten out into two vertical thrusts. The interior consists of a huge enclosed court flanked by offices, with an overdesigned abstract garden at ground level and a mezzanine balcony dripping with drawing-board spinach straight out of a Frank Lloyd Wright sketch of the '30s. The functional and spatial organization of the building express the director's democratic bias. Although the offices are isolated by windows, all the inhabitants share in a visually open plan of lateral movement, inside, toward the court and the occupants across the way— outside, toward the expansive Illinois landscape.

When the lab was officially dedicated in an outdoor ceremony last year, a fierce prairie wind almost blew the visiting dignitaries off the platform, but Wilson, persevering against difficulties, insisted that the ceremonies continue. Professor Leon Lederman of Columbia University, the main speaker, blamed Wilson right oft "as the one who got me up here, freezing, insecure, without a blackboard, without slides to show, and in a situation in which I feel totally uncomfortable." He then discussed the history and rationale of the lab, pointed out the enormous research potential of Wilson's creation, mentioned in passing the possible socio-economic benefits that might accrue from it, made a plea for the continued support of pure research, and continued, "this facility is nothing short of magnificent." He then described the complexities of the path traversed by a beam of protons after it leaves the ring and is "transported about two miles through a tortuous series of magnets which bend it, squeeze it, shrink it, peel off parts for experiments, and finally deliver it striking a target only a few thousandths of an inch across—a marvel of engineering and organization." He spoke of the future of this lab where "Pion beams, beams of charged and neutral Kaons, anti-proton beams, beams of particles of such short lifetime that the distance they cover, only inches in previous generations of accelerators, are now extended by the relativity principle and then higher energy to many yards, making incisive studies possible." He finally paid tribute to "our director, whose charisma, artistry, impudence and unflagging optimism have alternately driven us up the wall but also occasionally to some heights of pleasure." He ended his speech, with an "I wish I had said that" quotation from an exchange between Wilson and Sen. John Pastore at a "congressional inquisition":

> Sen. Pastore: *Is there anything connected with the hopes of this accelerator that in any way involves the security of this country?*
>
> Dr. Wilson: *No sir, I do not believe so.*
>
> Sen. Pastore: *Nothing at all?*
>
> Dr. Wilson: *Nothing at all.*
>
> Sen. Pastore: *It has no value in that respect?*
>
> Dr. Wilson: *It has only to do with the respect with which we regard one another, the dignity of men, our love of culture. It has to do with those things. It has to do with are we good painters, good sculptors, great poets. I mean all the things we really venerate and honor in our country and are patriotic about. It has nothing to do directly with defending our country except to make it worth defending.*

Kenneth Evett

Kenneth Evett is chairman of the department of art at Cornell.

25 years later, a new view of the forces that led to the infamous McCarthy era

Many theories have emerged since the 1950s to explain Joseph R. McCarthy's astounding stranglehold on our nation. Some credit McCarthy the man, others blame Truman's loyalty-security measures and cold-war politics. Now, Richard Fried contends that McCarthyism was generated largely within the Republican party and that the notorious Red-baiter was himself used by the GOP to combat Democratic authority and national influence. In relating the rise and fall of McCarthy to the actions and tactics of his political enemies, Fried has provided many valuable and perceptive insights that add to our understanding of partisan politics. "Exceptional breadth and detail on the politics of the 1950-54 period." —*The Kirkus Reviews*

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Books Considered

Civilizing the Machine: Technology and Republican Values In America, 1778-1900 by John F. Kasson

(Grossman; $12.50)

For many years, students of America have pondered the paradox of machine culture flourishing in a society with so many deep rhetorical commitments to nature and rurality. Pastoralism, yeomanry, virgin land, the middle landscape, Adamic and Edenic myths: these are among the terms employed to describe the anti-urban and anti-mechanical biases of our civilization, and its absorption with the self-sufficient life of agrarian independence. What has been particularly fascinating is the process by which industrialization has been assimilated into a value system which greeted it, initially, as intruder. The polarities represented by machine and garden were mediated, at least mythically, and Americans were able simultaneously to convince themselves of loyalty to their ancient ideals and to exploit the logic of mass production.

John Kasson, who teaches American history at the University of North Carolina, has produced a refreshing and compelling examination of this transformation, which he aptly labels "Civilizing the Machine." Studying more than a century of discussion and debate, Kasson uncovers the strategies Americans used to subjugate machine energy to republican ideology. In the first of the five essays that comprise the book he examines the effort of the first generations of political spokesmen to link technology with republicanism, principally by extolling the advantages of prosperity and invention for the realization of revolutionary ideals. American industrial promotion, according to Kasson, has had a long pedigree; the impulse to develop an American system of manufactures was "not a conspiracy hatched in private but a campaign relentlessly urged in public, under the banner of American republicanism," this, years before Alexander Hamilton issued his *Report on Manufactures* of 1791. Hamilton culminated rather than initiated a tradition of justification which identified America with the energies of wealth, as well as with the austerity of civic virtue. By promising to distribute the fruits of labor more widely, "technology made luxury safe for democracy," and enabled political leaders to adapt the 18th century dream of the good society to dilemmas posed by increasing wealth.

But knowing full well the disasters of British industrialization, and reacting to the horrors of Birmingham and Manchester, American publicists promised safeguards. In a second essay, on the sanitized workshops of Lowell, Massachusetts, Kasson explores the attempt to engineer a compromise between egalitarian ideals and the Satanic mills, principally by constructing clean, orderly, model societies, whose workers would be protected, physically and morally, by the paternalism of their employers.

Lowell was no permanent answer. After exposing the forces that doomed its bright vision, Kasson turns to Ralph Waldo Emerson, whose ringing affirmations of the power of new machinery were qualified by fears about their ultimate effects. Though Emerson celebrated technology "as a stimulus to creative vision" in his earlier years, later in his career "he emphasized more its tendency to debase the imagination." Emerson's solution was not to abandon technology, but to subordinate it to the imaginative life, a quest that other Americans accepted when they adorned and decorated machinery, and tried to associate it with the sublimity of high art. Dissenting from John Kouwenhoven's theory of the vernacular as the basic American approach to machine design, an approach emphasizing simplicity and functionality, Kasson demonstrates how traditional artistic motifs and ornate ornament burdened American engines. However exasperating, to our generation, was the national refusal "to recognize a moral and esthetic conflict between this passionate embrace of the machine" and a love of nature, 19th-century Americans refused to see a necessary opposition.

Finally, in his last essay, Kasson confronts what he sees as the final effort to reconcile republican orthodoxy and mechanized power: utopian fiction. The novels of Edward Bellamy, Mark Twain, and Ignatius Donnelly come in for particular description. The utopian impulse appears "an expression of republican ideology *in extremis*, a desperate attempt to demonstrate the continuing relevance and transforming power of America's republican tradition for the crises of industrial society." Never again would the republican concept be so significant in shaping American responses to technology, and the task of civilizing the machine would continue to elude easy accomplishment.

Thus the book's title is, to some degree, ironic; the best efforts of republican artists, industrialists, novelists and philosophers were insufficient to tame the beast. Civilizing the machine has often meant mechanizing civilization. But even more significant is Kasson's provocative demonstration that gardens did not dominate the imagination of 19th-century Americans. The identification with energy, power, scale and movement that Americans so happily made; the glory in the smoke, speed, force and noise of the steam engines and locomotives; the abandon of journalists, politicians and farmers when they encountered the marvels of the century was not simply a cover for deeper fears. It represented a basic response to machinery, an affirmation of unambiguous wonder. Pastoralism may well have rested uncomfortably at the center of some reactions to machinery, particularly by artists and intellectuals, but it did not trouble the popular mind. "To be both Nature's nation and a rapidly developing industrial power" seemed no contradiction but "the fulfillment of America's destiny." In deviating from a classic position, one argued forcefully by many senior scholars, Kasson has elegantly introduced a disturbing note for the ecological sensibility to ponder. The national love affair with technology has deeper roots than many Jeffersonians suspect, and efforts to redirect affection for machinery into respect for the larger eco-system may be more difficult than most imagine. For the defeat of efforts to integrate republicanism and technology—at Lowell and elsewhere—did not seriously shake national optimism or exhilaration. We confront this passion across the centuries, diminished

Coming

Erich Segal
on the Olympic Games

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perhaps by recent history, but still alive and well. Kasson has reminded us of its strength, and has demonstrated, impressively, that the American vernacular and popular dreams offer no secure corrective.

Neil Harris

Neil Harris is director of the National Humanities Institute at the University of Chicago.

Adventure, Mystery, And Romance by John G. Cawelti

(University of Chicago; $15)

The Life Of Raymond Chandler by Frank MacShane

(Dutton; $12.50)

Popular culture as something distinct and separate from high culture is a relatively new idea and, on balance, a rather bad one. That is, it has served us badly. The widespread acceptance of these categories in the field of literature, to get quickly to the point, has encouraged narrowness and laziness among critics, complacence among those who have been told they are serious writers, and has caused frustration among those who have been told they are not.

It is not that a hundred or even 75 years ago the critics and the reading public did not turn up their noses at certain literary works. Yet at least back then great numbers of books were not dismissed out of hand simply because they were of some particular type. Wilkie Collins' *The Woman in White* and *The Moonstone*, as examples, were praised in their day *as novels* and not as a thriller and an early detective novel, respectively. In fact, such categories did not then exist. They and all the rest of the present so-called genres of popular fiction have been derived from 19th-century models: science fiction from the works of Jules Verne, the mystery from Poe and Collins, the western from Fenimore Cooper, etc. The enduring and increasing popularity of such forms with the vast paperback audience today is an indirect tribute to the qualities of 19th-century literature.

So, too, is such a book as John G. Cawelti's *Adventure, Mystery, and Romance*, in essence a limited defense of what he calls formula literature. ("A literary formula is a structure of narrative or dramatic convention employed in a great number of individual works.") At the start he suggests almost timorously: "Formula literature is, first of all, a kind of literary art. Therefore, it can be analyzed and evaluated like any other kind of literature." He proceeds to do so, and it is only then—when actually dealing with the stuff of formula fiction—that he manages to shed his academic inhibitions and write with enthusiasm about a body of literature that obviously holds great fascination for him. And even here he keeps up his guard. He doesn't for a minute wish those of his colleagues who may dip into the book to think that he takes these formula stories as seriously as all *that*. There are references peppered throughout the text to grander writers than those he deals with here and their superior treatment of similar material. There is sometimes, in other words, an embarrassingly tentative, bet-hedging note to his presentation.

But when Cawelti is good, he is very, very good. And this, as noted, is in his description of the various formulas of popular fiction and in the analysis of particular works which he feels demonstrate them. He uses *The Godfather*, for example, as his Exhibit A for the crime story—not because it is the most characteristic but because it is a virtual compendium of different plot types—the rise of the gangster; the gang war; the glorification of the enforcer figure; and the planning and execution of a caper. (All this in a novel of Italian-American family life!) Although less sympathetic to the classical detective story, Cawelti offers an interesting treatment of it, in which he concentrates on the works of Agatha Christie. To this he contrasts the American hard-boiled detective story, using Hammett, Chandler and Spillane as his models. On the western, a subject to which he devoted an earlier book (*The Six-Gun Mystique*), he is especially good, tracing its development from Fenimore Cooper, through the dime novels and Zane Grey, and on finally to the movie domination

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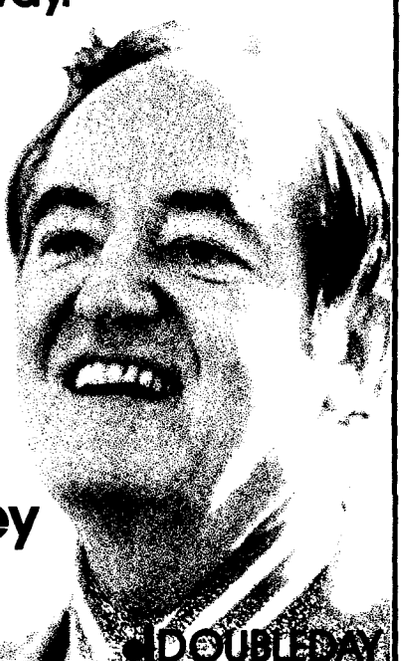

THE EDUCATION OF A PUBLIC MAN
My Life and Politics
Hubert H. Humphrey
Edited by Norman Sherman

DOUBLEDAY

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of the genre during the past decades.

Cawelti is at his best and most original in his discussion of what he calls the "best-selling social drama"—the kind we associate with Harold Robbins, Herman Wouk and Jacqueline Susann. You know the type: characters in a vast social panorama (historical or contemporary) are presented in strong dramatic conflict which usually works out to a more or less happy conclusion, affirming "after appropriate tribulations and sufferings, that God is in his heaven and all's right with the world." (Isn't E.L. Doctorow's *Ragtime* just such a novel directed to an opposite conclusion?) Cawelti is, I believe, the first critic to identify this sort of novel as written to a separate and specific formula, which of course it is. He traces its development back to Dickens and identifies its characteristics for the most part through treatment of the novels of Irving Wallace.

But why stop there? It seems to me there are many other formulas just as clearly defined as those Cawelti has taken up here, though they are not usually recognized as such. Nearly all so-called "serious" novels (Cawelti calls them "mimetic") are written whether consciously or not, to a formula of some sort. Here are a few: the "underground man" novel, after Dostoevsky (Ralph Ellison's *Invisible Man* and Saul Bellow's *Dangling Man* and *Herzog*); the academic novel (Mary McCarthy's *The Groves of Academe*, its opposite number, Randall Jarrell's *Pictures from an Institution*, and every novel ever written with a protagonist who is a teacher of creative writing); the *Bildungsroman* (too many to mention); the family novel, usually ethnic; the novel of abused adolescence; and so on. A friend of mine who has made a study of the subject assures me that most black fiction today derives from the old 19th-century slave narratives; so, too, it seems to me, do most of the recent feminist novels. There are many other such classifications, but the number is, after all, limited—and that is just the point. It may not suit you to think of these as formulas, but when Saul Bellow chose the particular form he did for *Dangling Man* he was accepting restrictions of form similar to those that a writer such as Raymond Chandler did when he wrote detective stories.

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Chandler is an interesting case in point. He is the most considerable American literary artist ever to write what Cawelti would call formula fiction. He was a better and more conscientious writer than a number of others—Sinclair Lewis, James T. Farrell, John O'Hara come to mind immediatley—whose reputations are far more secure. Yet only now is he beginning to receive the kind of recognition and attention he deserved and so desperately wanted in his lifetime. The surest sign of this is a new and excellent study, *The Life of Raymond Chandler*, by Frank MacShane, in which from first to last Chandler is taken seriously as a novelist by a literary biographer whose previous book was a highly praised work on Ford Madox Ford.

In it, MacShane tells the story of a man who seemed singled out by background, education and experience to be an important writer yet was kept from it for better than half his life. Born in Chicago in 1888, Chandler was brought to Ireland by his mother when she left his American father. He was raised there and in England and subsequently attended Dulwich College, which he left with earnest literary ambitions. MacShane comments: "His double vison—half-English, half-American—enabled him to see the world he lived in with exceptional insight."

There followed a period in England when he worked in the civil service yet devoted his passion and most of his energy to the writing of poems, essays and reviews in such Georgian journals as *The Academy* and *The Westminster Gazette*. All this before World War I, in which he served with the Canadian Expeditionary Force. After the war, possessed of a British accent "you could cut with a baseball bat," he went to California, taking his mother along. There he eventually married a woman nearly his mother's age and had a sort of wildcat career in the oil business before going bust in the Great Depression.

It was only then, at the age of 45 and more or less at the end of his rope that he actually began his career as a writer. He had been reading the pulp detective magazines—*Black Mask*, in particular—and he decided that writing such stuff would be a safe way to break in. And that is what he did. Working with much greater care and precision than was usual in the field, he put himself to school writing for the pulps—three stories one year, three stories the next, and so on—until at last he was ready to try a novel. This he managed by a process he called "cannibalizing"—that is, taking stories he had already written, stitching them together into novel-length continuity, and rewriting them. In this way he produced *The Big Sleep* (1939) *Farewell, My Lovely* (1940) and *The Lady in the Lake* (1944), three of his best, which rasied the hard-boiled detective story to the level, if you will, of the mimetic novel. He showed it could be done. It was only with his valedictory, *The Long Goodbye* (1954), that he again managed to achieve the standard he set with those three.

With Chandler, rewriting made all the difference. He worked painstakingly, through draft after draft, to achieve the seemingly casual flow of his idiomatic first-person narrative. Philip Marlowe, his detective, is a creation of pure style—an attitude, a set of values implicit in a distinctive diction. Chandler had little talent for the sort of intricate plotting associated with the classic detective story—hence his stitched-together novels. He knew his weakness, and he didn't mind in the least: "the mind which can produce a coolly thought-out puzzle can't, as a rule, develop the fire and dash necessary for vivid writing."

Raymond Chandler was the purest sort of literary artist, and MacShane's claims for him—that he was "one of the most important writers of his time as well as one of the most delightful"—seem not all exaggerated. Chandler was totally absorbed in writing itself—not in getting across a message, and certainly not in merely revealing whodunit. Better than most of his contemporaries he fulfills Roland Barthes' definition of an author:

> *. . . the author is a man who radically absorbs the world's* why *in a* how to write. And the miracle, so to speak, is *that this narcissistic activity has always provoked an interrogation of the world: by enclosing himself in the* how to write, *the author ultimately discovers*

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the open question par excellence: why the world? What is the meaning of things? In short, it is precisely when the author's work becomes its own end that it regains a mediating character: the author conceives of literature as an end, the world restores it to him as a means: and it is in this perpetual inconclusiveness that the author rediscovers the world, an alien world moreover, since literature represents it as a question—never, finally, as an answer.

Chandler asked the question in writing detective stories—what better place to ask questions of any sort? Yet it could have been asked—and has been—in westerns, in best-selling social melodramas, in ethnic family novels, and in academic novels. They are all finally and fundamentally *writing*, after all. The consideration is not so much *why* or *what*, but *how*.

Bruce Cook

Bruce Cook is a free-lance writer and author of a forthcoming biography of Dalton Trumbo.

The Franchiser by Stanley Elkin

(Farrar, Straus & Giroux; $8.95)

Stanley Elkin is our eminent vulgarian, a sensitive receiver at large in access-road America. Having eaten with the Colonel and seen "blockbusters" at Cinemas I through IV, having talked with the nation's innkeepers, Elkin invents *The Franchiser*, a marvelously voiced novel about "the man who made America look like America, who made America famous."

Few writers locate their fiction in popular culture as insistently and perceptively as Elkin does. Pynchon uses popular culture to extend the range of his paranoid systems. Barthelme and others make foolery of our stylized environment. Elkin's bit is finer and goes deeper. He drills desire, how popular culture creates and satisfies need, and he finds flecks of beauty in the roughage.

His first novel, *Boswell*, had celebrity as its subject. *A Bad Man* put the old-movie businessman in an old-movie prison. *The Dick Gibson Show* mixed fairytale with the heyday of American radio. Obsessed with singularity, the heroes of these novels rebel against the ordinary and conventional even while they are motivated by the big ideas of popular culture.

Now, in *The Franchiser*, Elkin makes a man who wants "to costume his country" with "all its ubiquitous, familiar neon signatures and logos," the franchised signs that he, Ben Flesh, is at home wherever he drops out of the interstate grid. Surely this standardization has its economic purpose, is esthetically disastrous, and may be megalomaniacal, but Elkin and Flesh register the pleasant twitch of familiarity—"There's the McDonald's"—that precedes our reasoned objections, the goofy comfort of Radio Shack and Dairy Queen, the vulgar services that link us in America.

There are no franchises named Flesh's. Ben has made others' names—Howard Johnson, Colonel Sanders—flesh and, at 48, wonders why the print of his own personality never developed. As his businesses move toward unity, his body is springing apart with multiple sclerosis. What this assault on normalcy means may be out there "in the packed masonry of states," so Ben Flesh makes his grand rounds, from Mister Softee in South Dakota to One Hour Martinizing in St. Louis, and drives back into himself.

The book consists of linked stories from Flesh's past and present. They are not a plot but a Rand-McNally view of man in motion, an atlas of comic and moving encounters with his employees, road people, earlier Elkin characters, and his adopted "family," the Finsbergs, 18 brothers and sisters named after Tin Pan Alley stars. The exotically diseased Finsbergs are the weakest part of the novel and represent Elkins' susceptibility to the merely eccentric. His minor characters are best as chambers for Flesh's voice, intensifiers of his self-awareness, and as figures in the geometry of franchise he has created. Even the Insight Lady, amateur interpreter of everything and one of Flesh's women, is most interesting as yet another dummy for Elkin's voice.

This voice—wheeling, dealing, spieling, yet feeling, too—is, quite simply, the novel, its main attraction and source of all its other achievements. Sentence for sentence, nobody in America writes better than Stanley Elkin. For him, the novel is primarily a place for language, energized and figurative language, to happen. In *The Franchiser*, language possesses the world like a loan shark. The smudged surfaces of America come clean, the shoptalk of business clears, the texture of life in a popular culture beads up.

Elkin's prose is not photography but metaphorical semiotics. When he writes "popcorn in cylinders large as Quaker Oats boxes, with dollops of drawn butter and high drifts of buff popcorn in the greased glass like a spell of cockeyed weather," we re-see the physical and understand through metaphor our small pleasures at the popcorn machine. This kind of signification is stroked throughout the novel to give it an extraordinary density and grain.

Elkin's oral models—sales pitch, speech, reminiscence—give it energy. Even analysis has colloquial vigor and voice's momentum, as in this commentary on customers at Ben Flesh's salvage store: "They have a sweet tooth for remnant, for rubbish, remainder. All the derelict and marooned, the ditched and scavenged. Debris, dregs, lees. Dregs addicts. All the multitudinous slag of the ordinary. Is it economy that puts this thirst in them? I don't know but I don't think so. I think acquisition, some squirrel vestige in the instincts, something miserly and niggardly, basic but not base, the things of the world as heirloom. The *world* as heirloom, handed down and continuing. History's hugged dower."

Some of this is also Elkin on Elkin—and points to the novel's weaknesses. Elkin's collecting deprives him of a large cumulative effect, and his attention to the "slag of the ordinary" sometimes seems a waste of perception. But these flaws are on the side of plenitude, the wondrous fullness Elkin shows us (and invents) beneath the finish of franchised America. William Gaddis' *JR* won a National Book Award for reminding us of what we already knew about the noise and waste of American business. Without being commerce's Pollyanna, Elkin in *The Franchiser* gives us what we could—and after reading it can—see out there under the arches and neon torches.

Thomas LeClair

Thomas LeClair teaches contemporary fiction at the University of Cincinnatti.

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The Modernization Of Sex by Paul Robinson

(Harper & Row; $8.95)

The polls tell us that Americans today are having more sex and liking it better than ever before. Few would deny that we are experiencing a profound transformation of social mores. Yet, if we are revolutionaries, we are not without ideology. As historian Paul Robinson reminds us in this admirable book, there is little that is new in the domain of ideas about sexuality. Robinson traces the modern sexual tradition back to the turn of this century when another callow generation first discovered its enthusiasm for love's recreational aspect. All we have on our side is numbers. Yesterday's avant-garde is today's majority rule.

Three intellectual portraits—one of Havelock Ellis, one of Alfred Kinsey and one of William Masters and Virginia Johnson—comprise this study. Along with Freud, says Robinson, they are the individuals most responsible for the way we think and, perhaps, behave sexually today. Though Freud is unquestionably the larger theoretical intelligence of the group, he is least representative of the modernist impulse. Despite the Freudians' lingering commitment to the "demonic potential" of the sexual instinct, sexual ideology in this century has been liberal and optimistic in its conviction that a freer sexual life is essential to individual and social well-being. It has broadened the range of normative sexual behavior beyond adult genital heterosexuality. It has assigned woman a more aggressive sexual role and liberated her from the tyranny of the vaginal orgasm. It has even cast suspicion on monogamous marriage as the most virtuous "institutional context" for adult sexuality.

A century ago the dominant social ethos on both sides of the Atlantic sanctioned married love, exclusively in the missionary posture, as an acceptable form of sexual outlet. In the developing industrial societies of the West, thrift in semen made for good sense, if not for good sex. The man who wanted to get ahead in the world couldn't well afford to expend his energies carelessly. Nor in his compact urban quarters, could he sustain a large family, the invariable consequence of excess copulation in that age of less-than-perfect contraception. Constraint of passion was more than a personal virtue in the Victorian era. There was social utility in the widely-held belief that fully half of humanity—the female half—was sexually anaesthetic or, at best, weak.

It should come as no surprise, however, that biological imperatives were not long in asserting themselves over social ones. Moreover, a maturing capitalist economy readily adapted to, and, perhaps, even fostered, more enthusiastic patterns of sexual consumption. By the early decades of this century, a liberal sexual doctrine had become "explicit and systematic," according to Robinson, its hallmark, a "pervasive tolerance" for individual variation in sexual behavior.

Havelock Ellis, the British sexual psychologist, emerges as the most important figure of this transitional period. With his seven-volume *Studies in the Psychology of Sex*, he fathered, if you will, the modern school of sexology. Kinsey became its most famous adherent, and Masters and Johnson, its most successful entrepreneurs. All four have traditionally been labeled "empiricists," says Robinson, and thought of merely as the George Gallups of human sexual response. But individual "biases, tensions and modes of reasoning" shape their data, and their writings deserve the same rigorous analysis one would accord a political theorist or philosopher of comparable stature.

This is not an original point. Lionel Trilling took Kinsey to task for his pretense of scientific objectivity and moral neutrality when the *Male* report was first published in 1948. But Robinson does not share Trilling's disdain for the no-nonsense materialism of the modern sexologists. To the contrary, he applauds their presumption that human sexual behavior can be, and ought to be, measured solely in terms of its physiological components. The more explicit the better. His most devastating critique, in fact, is leveled at Masters and Johnson for the "muddled" imprecision of their four-phase cycle of human sexual response—excitement, plateau, orgasm and resolution. The instruments of the laboratory discern no physiological basis for such categorization, he points out, and if what they are talking about is subjective or psychologic response, their labels do no justice to the complexity of an individual's perception of his responses from one situation, or one partner, to another. He diffuses the humanist concern that motivated Trilling with the simple proposition that no matter how it "feels," there is a common body reaction in sexual activity that's worth investigating.

Robinson's task is to analyze sexual thought, not to apologize for it, but his own viewpoint is clear. Ellis and Kinsey are favored here because they argue that what is natural is moral, what *is* is what ought to be. Robinson's most valuable commentary addresses this issue, and it is positively dazzling. He identifies a tension common to the sexologists who, on the one hand, uncover a wealth of erotic activity, but on the other, invent a program of therapy designed to make monogamous heterosexual intercourse successful. The moderns, says Robinson, have raised to the level of debate "the most vexing problem of human sexual psychology: the paradoxical need for both companionship and variety in erotic life."

In a terse, but elegant, epilogue, he places this paradox in the sweeping perspective of the Romantic revolution against Christian asceticism that began in the 18th century. Modern sexual thought, he argues, reaffirms the Romantic ideal of a union of the physical and the spiritual. But in its recognition, that as a purely clinical matter, the best sex may be a matter of the "flesh" and not of the "heart," it veers sharply from this tradition.

Ellis was the most romantic of the modernists. It never occured to him that gourmet lovemaking might not result in "transcendent" heights of mutual affection. Kinsey, to the opposite extreme, fell back upon his training as a zoologist and argued that man's refusal to confront his basic animal nature is what causes him so much bewilderment. The "schizoid" character of Masters and Johnson's work, Robinson writes, reminds us that the tension remains unresolved. They scrutinize sexual partnership in the laboratory and recommend the mechanical vibrator over the male sex organ where the objective is female satisfaction. Yet, they condemn sexual encounters devoid of "human content" and write saccharine elegies to the virtues of marital fidelity.

"As moderns," Robinson concludes, "we remain permanently divided between a Romantic past, whose repressions we would gladly rid ourselves of, and a deromanticized future, whose emotional emptiness we fear even while we anticipate its greater freedom." No writer has put it better.

There are shortcomings to Robinson's rigorously intellectual approach. His

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limited reliance on textual analysis invariably permits him to raise more questions than he can answer. One wants to know more, for example, about the relationship of sexual liberation and women's liberation. One needs a better sense of the interaction between sexual theory and sexual behavior. Who has really been influencing whom? The psychoanalytic debate with the sexologists over the causes of human sexual inadequacy demands further elaboration. Still, this sophisticated treatment of the ideological origins of today's rebellion is long overdue. Future research will benefit from the parameters that Robinson has established for discussion of a sensitive subject.

Ellen Chesler

Ellen Chesler is a graduate student in history at Columbia.

Escape from Evil by Ernest Becker

(Free Press; $9.95)

In man's effort to understand himself the ideal has been to uncover those few fundamental features of being human that constitute the basic dynamics of all human behavior, and thus explain society, culture and history. The theories of Freud and Marx continue to exert a powerful attraction because, aside from their promise of practical application to social revolution and psychotherapy, they offer relatively compelling accounts of the basic forces underlying all human phenomena. Ernest Becker's work is intellectually exciting in large part because of his ambitious claim to offer an alternative and more accurate account of what essentially makes man what he is and behave as he does. But in trying to fulfill the dream of laying bare the foundation of a general "science of man," he produces a nightmare vision.

In *The Denial of Death*, for which he was posthumously awarded the Pulitzer prize in 1974, and now in its posthumously published sequel, *Escape from Evil*, Becker elaborates the central theme that all human activity is ultimately motivated by man's futile endeavor to overcome his own ineluctable mortality. And he certainly shows this to be a synoptic hypothesis of considerable explanatory power, worthy of our serious consideration. He convincingly urges us to see ourselves as confronted by the brute fact of physical death, seeking surrogate immortality not only in the religious idea of an indestructible soul, but also "symboligcally" through membership in social groups that continue indefinitely past our individual deaths, through biological progeny and the spiritual progeny of students and disciples, and through legacies of accumulated goods and creative work.

One can easily appreciate how this view of man integrates so much seemingly disparate data and still find some of Becker's conclusions unconvincing. It is one thing to argue that man's attempt to overcome death is one of the basic motives of human behavior, and quite another to claim that it is the sole ultimate motive. And he takes for granted that all strategies for the "symbolic" transcendence of death are inherently failures and grounded in self-deception only because he implausibly holds that the seeking of *a kind of* immortality through children, creative work, etc. inevitably involves the hope of thereby *literally* denying physical death and thus the refusal to face the fact that we are animals who die along with their bodies. But does even the artist or scientist who hopes for a measure of immortality through his work expect, in some inchoate way, to avoid physical death by means of his work? If not, his endeavor seems neither necessarily doomed to failure nor grounded in self-deception.

In *The Denial of Death*, drawing heavily and explicitly on the work of Otto Rank and Norman O. Brown, Becker recasts many psychoanalytic ideas, replacing Freud's basic dynamic of sexuality and instinctual gratification with that of man's reaction to his mortality and to his dependence, vulnerability and powerlessness in an overwhelmingly powerful world. Running through these reinterpretations is the theme that man has a general repugnance toward his body because it is as a body that man is vulnerable, limited and mortal. This is clearly exemplified in Becker's reinterpretation on the disgust and fascination with anal functions, which Freud had accounted for in terms of the trauma of toilet training: "The anus and its incomprehensible, repulsive product represents not only physical determinism and boundness, but the fate as well of all that is physical: decay

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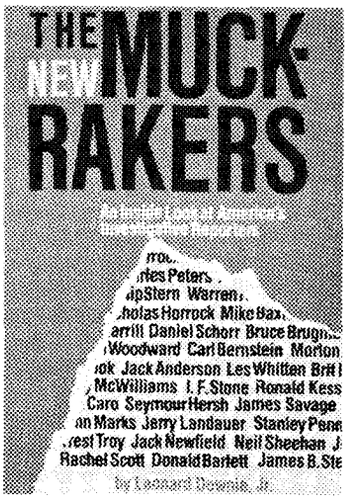
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and death."

While it is often enlightening to reconsider psychoanalytic phenomena such as the Oedipus complex, perversion, transference and neurosis, from the more existential viewpoint of man's despairing awareness of his own limitations, it is not clear why the body and death should be the peculiar loci of this despair. Becker seems oblivious to the obvious fact that we are creatures limited as much by our finite minds as by our finite bodies. And though death is undeniably one of the basic limitations on human existence, there are others that are independent of our mortality. Consider, for instance, the general inability of human beings to get or do whatever they want whenever they want it. The impossibility of the immediate gratification of all our wishes is as much an existential given as our mortality; frustration through delay is as pervasive and inescapable a restriction of human existence as death. Becker repeatedly asserts without much argument that all human limitations derive from our mortality, but how would the extension of life, even to infinity, ameliorate the onerous human necessity to practice patience?

In *Escape from Evil*, Becker shifts his emphasis from individual psychology to social theory. He tries to show how his death-centered view of man gives the most satisfactory explanation of human "evil," *i.e.*, of cruelty, aggression, social inequality and the need for subjugation, scapegoats and sacrifice. In developing his positions, he makes frequent appeal to insights found in various studies of primitive peoples. He begins the book by citing with full approval the view of the anthropologist, A.M. Hocart, that "the universal human ambition" is "the achievement of prosperity—the good life," and that, accordingly "the object of ritual is to secure full life." With considerable confusion Becker tries to assimilate Hocart's view to his own, but to seek the good life is not necessarily to seek to prolong life or achieve immortality. In certain situations, considerations of the quality and quantity of life may even come into conflict. The ample evidence gathered by anthropologists, that man uses ritual as a magical technique to gain control over the environment and thus over his own life, is not, contrary to Becker, in itself evidence that the primary point of ritual is immortality.

This tendency to misinterpret data as being evidence for the immortality motive manifests itself throughout the book. What Becker actually achieves is a series of insightful analyses of social behavior, particularly that which is "evil," in terms of a basic human desire for actual and symbolic power. He convincingly argues that a great deal of human behavior is comprehensible only in terms of power, which he calls "the basic category of the human animal's existence." Without any real argument, however, Becker goes on to assert that "the power [man] wants most" is "to persevere as an organism, to continue experiencing." And even more untenably, "All power is in essence power to deny mortality."

As was realized a century ago by Nietzsche (whose pioneering work on the psychology of power Becker almost totally ignores), power is not simply a means to or a symbol of survival: "'Will to existence': that will does not exist . . . not will to life but . . . will to power. There is much in life that life esteems more highly than life itself."

Ivan Soll

Ivan Soll is professor of philosophy at the University of Michigan.

transition: The History Of a Literary Era, 1927-1938 by Dougald MacMillan

(Braziller; $12.50)

Both for what it did and what it stood for, the Paris-based magazine, *transition* formed a milestone in recent literary history. It published James Joyce, Gertrude Stein, Hart Crane and Dylan Thomas; a translation of "The Sentence" in one of its 1928 issues marked Kafka's first appearance in English; it mingled poem drawings and more formal art work with essays on nonliterary topics like film, painting and sculpture. But the aims and achievements of "the most important of the American expatriate 'little' magazines" have often been misunderstood. Dougald MacMillan's purpose, in his thorough, judicious study, is to rescue *transition* from the inaccuracies overhanging it.

First, the magazine, which ran for 27 issues between 1927-38, belongs more to the 1930s than to the 1920s, where it is usually put. Next, in spite of its popular association with irrationalism, obscurity and expatriate nihilism (*The New York Times* called it "hopelessly muddled and unintelligible"), it followed no party line. Its contributors came from both Eastern and Western Europe as well as from America; they remained independent of each other; they all related differently to the magazine.

The one constant was its founder—who was also its talent scout, business manager and chief translator-editor. Eugene Jolas is one of the heroes of recent letters. His early career is as wild as some of the material he later published. Born in New Jersey of a German mother and a French father, he grew up in Forbach, near Strasbourg, in Alsace-Lorraine. He came back to the US at age 16, and, after working as a grocer's delivery boy in New York City, wrote articles on auto mechanics for a German-language paper in Pittsburgh. This job led, by stages, to his elevation to the literary department of the *Chicago Tribune*'s Paris office. Here, he showed the judgment, taste and originality that would later make him the best literary editor of his day. His weekly column, "Rambles Through Literary Paris," contained interviews with then-avant-garde figures like Gide, Giradoux, and Hemingway rather than with mainstream popular writers. Many of these figures later contributed to *transition*, consenting to work for small uniform fees. Impressed by his ability both to spot and to encourage new talent, they also helped Jolas get material no other literary editor had access to.

He always knew the importance of personal contacts. His dealings with Joyce, for instance, show that, having won a writer for his magazine, Jolas knew how to hold him. While Joyce had problems with other literary editors, like T.S. Eliot of *Criterion* and Marianne Moore of *The Dial*, he enjoyed working with the more journalistic-minded Jolas. His manuscripts appeared without long delay; articles about his "Work in Progress" (which became *Finnegans Wake*) often accompanied installments from the "Work"; he was never asked to forsake his apolitical stance.

Like its renunciation of social realism, *transition*'s wish to discover both a metaphysics and a language of the mind through literature appealed to other experimental writers besides Joyce. Though Jolas balked at some of the aims of expressionism, surrealism and dadaism, he sympathized enough with

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the deep spiritual unrest impelling these movements to give them their say: all good literature must be revolutionary. When Eliot declared himself "a classicist in literature, a royalist in politics, and an Anglo-Catholic in religion," on the other hand, Jolas accused him of intellectual treason. The writer was supposed to give vent to the dark side of the imagination, to probe the unconscious through dream, myth and hallucination. This new subject matter called for a new idiom. To convey the night world of demonic visions, the writer should ignore arbitrary linguistic conventions, like spelling, syntax and punctuation: words take their value from sound, not meaning. Joyce wasn't the only contributor to *transition* who took part in this linguistic revolution. In her attempt to probe the unconscious, Gertrude Stein also grouped words rhythmically instead of rationally; words arranged in patterns of rhythm and sound could lay bare unconscious, primitive energies.

Yet—an important qualification—Jolas didn't discredit objective reality to the extent of the surrealists or dadaists. Thus the American Hart Crane's attempt to heal the rift between poetry and technology encouraged him. Poetry fuses the primitive and the conscious, the spontaneous and the planned. By using the Brooklyn Bridge as an outlet to higher truths, Crane's *The Bridge* links the machine to spirit.

Shrewd organization helps MacMillan portray this exciting chapter of intellectual history to best advantage. Following a biographical section on Jolas, he discusses the publishing history of *transition:* its origins, its formation of an editorial staff, the drama of picking a name; well-versed in the mechanics of journalism, he describes details of assembling, printing and distributing the magazine. Next comes the long survey of people and principles that helped form *transition*'s character.

Through it all, MacMillan displays an outstanding range of critical skills—comparing *The Bridge* and *The Waste Land,* explicating passages from *Finnegans Wake,* and providing pocket histories of various literary movements. This authority makes good his final view of *transition* as "a part of a significant literary revolution which produced some of the best literature of the century."

Peter Wolfe

Peter Wolfe teaches English at the University of Missouri, St. Louis.

Correspondence

I Say Potato

To the editors:

Sidney Hook's review of my book, *Up From Communism: Conservative Odysseys in American Intellectual History* (*TNR,* Feb. 21, 1976), is characteristic, and perhaps that is all that needs to be said. But there are too many distortions, misrepresentations and pseudo-arguments to dismiss the review so easily. The best that can be said is that Hook is a careless reader, the worst that he is an inventor of false issues.

The first distortion occurs at the outset when Hook attempts to explain what he erroneously believes is the book's thesis. "For, if *Up From Communism* is designed to establish that 'out of the ashes of the old American Left' there arose 'the new American Right,' it is demonstrably mistaken. The overwhelming majority of the old American Left—regardless of how loosely defined—has remained left of the democratic center." This is precisely the point I made again and again in the book. Nowhere is there a "design" to prove otherwise. The new American Right did draw upon more than a dozen ex-radicals, but I stressed that the four writers I dealt with (Eastman, Dos Passos, Herberg and Burnham) by no means represented the legacy of the Left as they journeyed to the other end of the spectrum. Comparing the careers of these four figures to those of numerous other intellectuals in America and Europe, I concluded: "Thus there is something unique about those writers who made the complete conversion." I then offered several possible approaches to interpreting this pattern of behavior, neither of which proved entirely satisfactory. Hook, however, is convinced he possesses the answer. "What explains their shift is not apostasy or opportunism but, on the one hand, the unanticipated development of the mixed economy of the welfare state, and on the other, the transformation of their Socialist dream into a totalitarian nightmare." This simple generalization will hardly suffice. Since almost all old Left writers experienced these same historical developments, Hook fails to explain why some ex-radicals became militant neo-conservatives and why so many others did not.

No less misleading is Hook's quarrel with my use of political definitions. He has no patience with my characterization of Dos Passos as a libertarian radical, an anarcho-individualist whose basic conservatism can be seen in his lifelong desire to, in Dos Passos' words, "restore the dignity of the man who did the work." Hook rejoins: "This would make William Morris and Karl Marx conservatives, too." Of course, for this is the very point I made in comparing Dos Passos and Veblen, both of whom possessed radical sympathies and conservative sensibilities. Similarly, Hook challenges my definition of a conservative as one who is disposed to "nurture, revere and defend those values and institutions of the past." Many conservatives, Hook tells us, "do not 'nurture, revere and defend' slavery, absolute monarchy, theocracy and other tradition-drenched institutions of the past." The record of American history, from Hamilton to Calhoun to Henry Adams, indicates otherwise. Indeed Eastman felt compelled to renounce his association with Buckley and the *National Review* because it was steeped in theology and other "tradition-drenched institutions of the past." A Burkean worship of continuity remains central to any definition of conservatism, even when American conservatives find they have nothing to preserve but the liberal tradition.

Hook expresses disappointment at my "failure to come to grips with the shallow positivism of Eastman, the otherworldliness of Herberg, and the neo-Machiavellianism of Burnham." I may have failed to do so on Hook's grounds, but pragmatism is not my point of reference. My own critique of Burnham is in the book and in a forthcoming article to appear this June. As for Herberg, I do not find his Judaic existentialism "shallow," even though it offered a theology of crisis that ultimately could not resolve the

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epistemological crisis of knowledge. In respect to Eastman, Hook tells us he "was wrong about Hegel, Marx, Freud, Hayek and the science of revolution . . ." Apparently Hook is still trying to get in the last word in his debates with Eastman. Examining those debates, I showed that it was Hook, not Eastman, who was wrong in his conviction that Hegelian philosophy could be separated from Marxism. Hook's attempt to reconcile Marxism and American pragmatism had little support from John Dewey, who, like Eastman, realized that the dialectic was merely a form of "animism."

Hook concludes his review chastizing me for offering a "perverse misreading" of Buckley's cold war dictum: "Better the chance of being dead than the certainty of being Red." I had suggested that Buckley's comrades would have no trouble recognizing the "language of inevitability," for the "certainty" of Communist victory is an *idée fixe* of ex-radicals like Burnham, who have maintained this position on and off since the publication of his *The Struggle for the World* (1947). Hook offers the interpretation that "even capitulation may not ensure survival."

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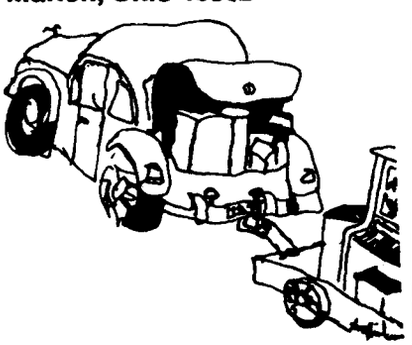

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Hook knows very well that this writer is not criticizing Buckley from the position of "capitulation." In the conclusion of the book I challenged the moral claims of conservative anti-communism by posing a simple question: why was it that when liberals advocated coming to terms with the status quo in Eastern Europe in the early '50s they were accused of "appeasement," whereas Kissinger's present détente and Helsinki accords, coming after the gory revelations of Gulag, are accepted as the essence of *realpolitik*?

J.P. Diggins
Laguna Beach, California

In reply:

Mr. Diggins' angry response to my gentle criticisms of his book has blurred his vision. The very first sentence of his preface states: "This book is an intellectual history of the 'final' struggle in America." The final struggle refers to the remark he quotes from Silone. "The final struggle will be between the Communist and ex-Communist." They constitute the movement Diggins calls "the Old Left." He explicitly declares that Eastman, Dos Passos, Herberg and Burnham were "the intellectual leaders of the Old Left."

Diggins is as wrong as he could be about this. For reasons I indicated they were far less influential in the late '20s and '30s than Joseph Freeman, Lewis Corey, Edmund Wilson and others who could be mentioned. The evolution of those whom he regards as "the intellectual leaders of the Old Left" which he deems highly significant—else why select them?—does not by any means reflect the evolution of the Old Left. That is why I pointed out that "the overwhelming majority of the Old American Left has remained left of the democratic center. By and large, its members have moved from revolution to reform not to reaction or even to the conservatism of the status quo."

Diggins now claims that this is "precisely" the point he himself makes on the pages he cites. Let him look again. These pages refer to members of the Old Left who do not end up in the camp of the *National Review*. But this is not "precisely" the point I was making.

Indeed, not only has Diggins' anger blurred his vision, it has blurred his understanding of the meaning of the passage. The rest of it reads:

> *What explains* their *shift is not apostasy or opportunism but, on the one hand, the unanticipated development of the mixed economy of the welfare state, and on the other, the transformation of their Socialist dream into a totalitarian nightmare.*

To which Diggins protests that this does not explain "the unique conversion" of Eastman, Dos Passos, Eastman and Burnham. But of course it does not! I am clearly not referring to them. "*Their*" in the passage, here italicized, refers to the overwhelming majority who did *not* become "militantly conservative."

Charles Peirce used to stress "the ethics of words." Define liberalism and conservatism as one wills; this creates an intellectual obligation to be consistent in the further use of the term. I indicated that Diggins offers varying and inconsistent definitions of conservatism. One of them asserts that "to be a conservative means . . . to nurture, revere and defend those values and institutions of the past." I pointed out that many conservatives—certainly the leading conservative economists—do not "nurture, revere and defend" slavery, absolute monarchy, theocracy and other tradition-drenched institutions of the past. Diggins disagrees. His evidence for the period he is writing about? "Max Eastman who felt compelled to renounce . . . the *National Review* because it was steeped in theology and other tradition-drenched institutions of the past."

But Eastman is one of Diggins' prime exhibits of a conservative! This reveals the inadequacy of his own definition of conservatism.

A few minor points. In the sentence in which I spoke of Eastman's views and which Diggins leaves incomplete, I was not continuing my old debates with Eastman but paying tribute to him, "to his everlasting credit" for the courage and insight in opposing Soviet terror before the rest of us. Nor did I characterize Herberg's faith as "shallow." I said it was "otherworldly" which makes it irrelevant to specific issues of this world. If God is "completely Other"—God is beyond good or evil, democracy or communism, freedom or slavery. Diggins is also mistaken about my views on détente and the Helsinki accords which are closer to George Meany's than to Gerald Ford's.

Sidney Hook

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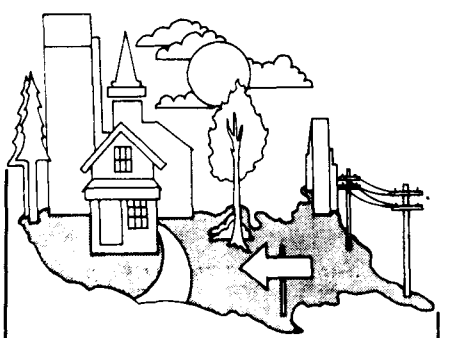

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